

MUNICIPAL PARKING STRATEGY

FINAL REPORT
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FOR [HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL](#)
ENDORSED BY COUNCIL DECEMBER 4 2017



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Document Information

Project Name	Horsham Municipal Parking Strategy
Document Name	Final Report
Client	Horsham Rural City Council
Job Number	5862
Prepared by	MRCagney Pty Ltd Melbourne

Quality Assurance Register

Issue	Description	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Authorised by	Date
1	First Draft Issue	TL	MW	SB	24.3.2017
2	Second Draft Issue	TL	MW	SB	25.9.2017
3	Final Version	TL	MW	SB	5.10.2017

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Executive Summary

MRCagney was engaged by Horsham Rural City Council to develop the Municipal Parking Strategy. This Strategy assists Council understand the complexities of the current parking environment and provides recommendations to manage car parking efficiently and sustainably in the Horsham CBD.

The Municipal Parking Strategy is centred on the recognition that car parking and the convenience of travel afforded by private vehicle travel, inevitably results in increased vehicular movements, which also poses irreversible impacts on land use patterns and development. Of primary interest to this strategy, is the detrimental impact that an oversupply of car parking can have on a town centre environment, like the Horsham CBD.

Development of the Municipal Parking Strategy has been informed by the following sources:

- Parking occupancy survey conducted in December 2016
- Community and stakeholder engagement workshops conducted by MRCagney in Horsham in June 2016
- Site visits to the Horsham CBD in June 2016
- Review of background strategic documents.

A summary of the key findings is provided below with greater detail available in the body of this report which have been used to inform recommendations for this strategy:

- There are 3,508 car parking spaces within the survey area, comprising 1,575 on-street spaces and 1,933 off-street spaces, but, unintentionally, the survey undertaken did not include the use of the Target car park (156 spaces) located on the north side of Wilson Street between Arthur Street and Park Drive
- Peak period occupancy is low. The peak parking accumulation of 2,273 vehicles was recorded for the surveys area as a whole which equated to a peak occupancy level of 62%, i.e. more than 1 of every 3 parking spaces was vacant at all times. This is significantly lower to the best practice benchmark level of 75% which is advised in regional settings, where 3 of 4 parking spaces are occupied at any given time
- Paid parking is operational at central CBD locations at a cost of \$1 for on-street parking (1P, 2P and 4P) while unrestricted parking is largely available at peripheral areas to the CBD
- Funds accrued from paid parking/fines totalled \$610,614 in 2015/16
- 4P parking experiences the highest occupancy of any time restriction, peaking at 9am, suggesting that there are not enough 4P spaces available and implying peripheral unrestricted parking is poorly utilised.
- Restricted parking experiences greater demand which infers motorists are not willing to park at unrestricted locations on the periphery of the CBD and then walk to their destination, because they are guaranteed a parking space at a central and conveniently located CBD location
- Parking occupancy has remained stagnant since 2012. While there has been an increase in supply, approximately 150 (including the Target car park) since 2012, parking demand has largely remained consistent during the same period
- Despite perceptions held by some local stakeholders, there are no current demand pressures for car parking in the Horsham CBD however it is appreciated that there are some 'hot spots' throughout the CBD that can experience demand pressures at certain times of the day.

The findings from the above activities conducted during various stages of this project have culminated in a set of recommendations for Council to consider. A summary of recommendations are provided here.

Recommendations

This strategy forms a basis for future considerations around parking and land use, providing support and guidance for Council through recommendations including:

- Generally, retain current paid parking rates and locations
- Commit to strategies and initiatives to reduce car dependence in Horsham while supporting the aspiration of making Horsham a leader in regional walkable communities
- Analyse and review of car parking occupancy should continue to be conducted on an annual basis. Monitoring of parking conditions, particularly the effectiveness of time-restricted parking can take place at different intervals throughout the year
- Regular parking enforcement should remain across the study area, and strengthen if possible
- The Horsham Parking Advisory and Consultative Committee is to remain operational
- Enable the development of residential dwellings and/or re-use of CBD buildings for residential purposes to improve activity and residential density in the CBD, while recognising the constraints which exist in providing car parking on these sites
- Improve signage and wayfinding for off-street car parks throughout the town to enable strong utilisation of peripheral and longer-term parking
- Consider covered walkways and incentives to encourage staff to park on the outer of the CAD and walk to work
- Consider covered walkways and incentives to encourage aged community to park and shop
- Improve amenity by increasing shade through street planting, verandahs and shade in Council owned car parks
- Undertake an audit of accessible (disability) parks to ensure location meets the needs of users, and that the parking spaces meet the requirements of accessibility.
- Improve and streamline signage and wayfinding
- Identify charge point locations for mobility scooters and e-cars

1 Introduction

MRCagney has been commissioned by the Horsham Rural City Council to prepare a Municipal Parking Strategy. The strategy provides analysis and recommendations to assist Council to understand the complexities of the current parking environment and to ensure informed parking related decisions can be made in the future.

Development of the strategy has involved:

- Stakeholder engagement undertaken in June 2016
- Background review of available strategic documentation
- Analysis of occupancy data; and
- Review of statutory and parking management tools to support the provision of recommendations and ongoing advice.

More specifically, development of the Strategy aims to:

- Identify common parking related issues present in the study area and propose strategies to resolve them
- Identify options to manage on-street and off-street parking effectively in the CBD to ensure optimal utilisation and turnover
- Review occupancy surveys to provide analysis of parking activity and ensure recommendations are supported by accurate data and evidence
- Analyse current fee levels of ticketed parking and investigate the effectiveness of the current paid parking regime, including the EasyPark system
- Review effectiveness of the Horsham Parking Advisory and Consultative Committee and make recommendations
- Conduct background review of strategic documentation for Horsham with specific reference to the *Horsham Central Activities District Strategy* and the *Horsham Framework for Managing Growth*.

1.1 Background

Horsham is a vibrant and diverse regional centre situated some 300 kilometres north west of Melbourne. The town plays an important role as the largest centre in the Wimmera region with key community services, education, retail and business services supporting a residential population of approximately 19,691.

Parking management has been identified by the Horsham Rural City Council as an issue that continues to demand significant time and resources. Council requires informed guidance and a refreshed approach to parking management while there is a perception within the community that parking supply is relatively inadequate. Occupancy surveys conducted in December 2016 confirm quite the contrary, revealing an oversupply of car parking in prime locations throughout the CBD.

The Municipal Parking Strategy confirms Council's commitment to manage car parking with consideration to broader strategic goals while ensuring an adequate supply of parking that reflects that of a regional city. The approach to this strategy resonates with the objectives identified in previous planning studies that have been undertaken for Horsham including the *Horsham Framework for Managing growth* which "offers sustainable opportunities for growth and will develop as a distinctive regional city, renowned for its stunning natural landscapes, lifestyle and recreational attributes", and the *North Horsham Urban Design Framework* which aims to "encourage pedestrian movement to focus on key routes, to concentrate activity and movement". These visions are bold and exciting and are achievable, however not in isolation of an effective parking management regime and a modal shift to more sustainable modes of travel. Furthermore, the *Central*

Activities District Strategy details how traffic engineering interventions have impacted the city since the early 2000's suggesting approaches employed during this time are outdated and no longer best practice.

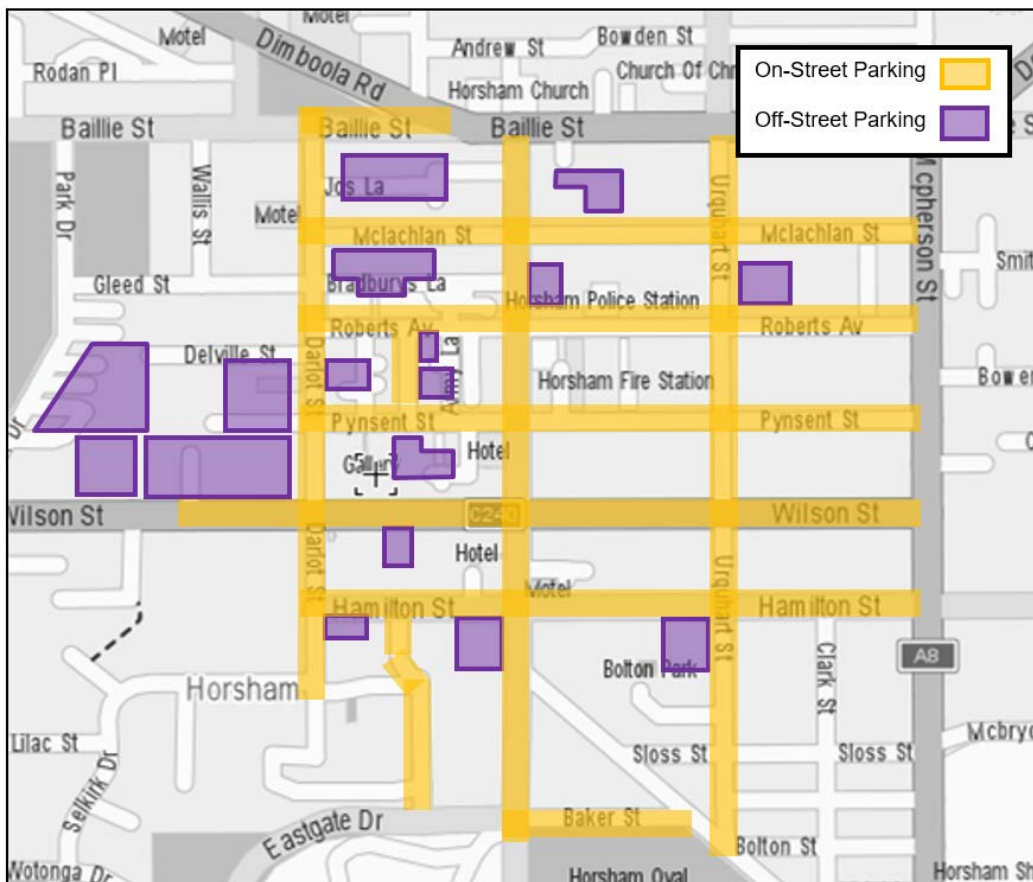
These interventions particularly relate to the change that appears to have occurred within the streets since the 2001 UDF. This includes the introduction of roundabouts at intersections, off-set pedestrian crossing points, and extensive centre-of-road and angle parking.

These changes have influenced the way people access the CBD as conditions have come to favour use of private vehicle over other modes. While the Municipal Parking Strategy primarily focusses on car parking, addressing issues in isolation of important movement and land use considerations would not provide an optimal outcome for this project. Council should use this Strategy as an opportunity to look more broadly at the bigger picture, to introduce a holistic framework to support decision-making around strategy development and to accelerate a shift in thinking about land use and transport initiatives. This approach will ensure coordination between important land use, economic and transport projects Horsham will embark on in the future.

1.2 Study Area

The parking study area is broader than the generally defined area of the Horsham Central Activity District (which is bounded by Darlot Street to the west, Hamilton Street to the south, Urquhart to the east and Baillie Street to the north). The parking study area is provided by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Study Area (source Cardno parking survey report)



1.3 How can car parking benefit the Horsham CBD?

Car parking can benefit the Horsham CBD in multiple ways if managed sustainably with broader objectives in mind. It is imperative that Council understands this now and acts accordingly. Regional towns that are private vehicle dependent and predominantly single-use, have resulted in their CBD's being immersed in a sea of free parking. This is a scenario that Horsham must avoid at all cost.

There is growing interest to make better use of central land in cities, both in urban and metropolitan contexts, internationally and throughout Australia. This approach comes from the recognition that cities that support people by providing amenable, welcoming and interesting places for a variety of activities and social exchange are places that generally become more prosperous. There are many examples in regional Victoria where this is the case including Bendigo, Kyneton, Beechworth and Metung, to name a few.

Horsham is no different to these places as the town offers its own unique attractions, boutique shopping and growing number of cafes. The CBD boasts a built form aesthetic that presents an interesting history and unique heritage. A relatively compact CBD grid makes for a welcoming and enjoyable walk, something that local business stands to benefit from. Walking distance to the Wimmera River also supports broader appeal to tourism markets.

Horsham is the largest town in the region and must continue to thrive in its own right. Car parking, while often perceived as being irrelevant in the broader land use context, must be identified as a core element to a successful town centre, therefore requires ongoing management and monitoring supported by a policy framework and strategic rationale.

If future planning activities in Horsham are planned around cars and traffic, then the outcome will be simply that: cars and traffic. If future planning activities are focussed on people and places, then the outcome will be people and places.

Horsham Rural City Council has recognised the relationship that exists between car parking and other land use objectives and has recently undertaken a CBD Revitalisation Strategy to guide future public realm interventions in the CBD with regard to transport, land use and infrastructure needs.

Parking management must be developed with broader needs in mind, which can involve Council's long-term strategic goals which may include proposed urban design upgrades to CBD areas, civic works, future mode shift, economic development and other plans identified to help support general revitalisation of the CBD. A car parking rationale should help support these options not hinder them, something that this car parking strategy aims to achieve.

Car parking in Horsham must be managed with a set of objectives in mind to ensure it serves optimal land use solutions, namely:

- On-street car parking is managed under time-restrictions that encourage turnover and utilisation, while ensuring visitors are afforded efficient time for users to fulfil their visit to the CBD
- Paid parking for on-street parking is correctly priced to encourage regular turnover and efficient utilisation
- Paid parking is applied in areas with high demand for kerb space while unpriced parking is located in more peripheral locations. This ensures that users pay an appropriate price for parking in convenient high-value locations
- On-street parking supports adjacent land uses and local business
- On-street parking is managed to avoid circumstances where visitors to the CBD can freely and easily make multiple trips throughout the CBD, passing by local retail and not adding to on-street pedestrian activity

- Parking supply should achieve a peak period occupancy level in a range between 75%-85%.

1.4 Horsham: A walkable rural city

The need to create a more sustainable movement network is becoming a key objective for not only major cities, but also small and medium sized regional and rural centres as the economic, social and environmental impacts of fossil fuels, traffic congestion and urban sprawl are increasingly some of our greatest challenges.

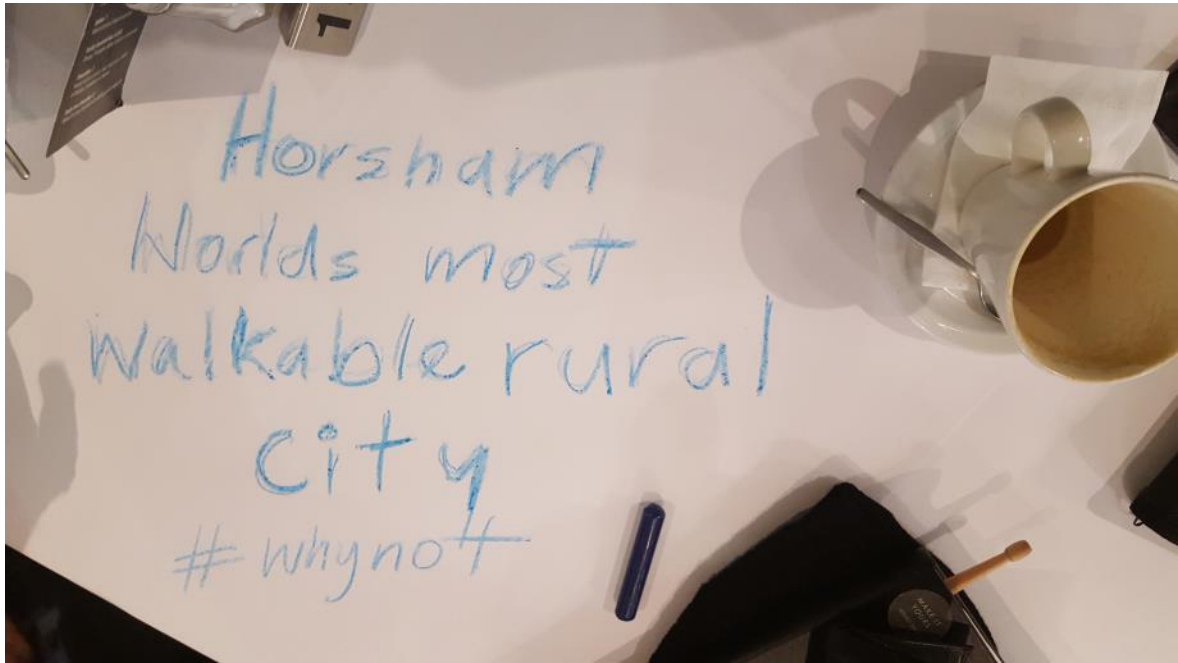
Horsham is endowed with a vibrant central-city grid network of streets and laneways with key attractions and services accessible easily through walking. The CBD is an activity hub and key meeting place with cafés and retailers lining Firebrace Street, Roberts Avenue and Pynsent Street. This mix naturally creates an amenable space that is active and interesting and importantly an environment that is best experienced on foot. A future Horsham CBD environment should optimise this great asset not threaten it inadvertently through poor parking management, particularly a regime that would lead to greater parking supply.

MRCagney facilitated stakeholder engagement workshops for this project in June 2016. During the workshops, naturally some other important land use and mobility issues arose on the topic of what sort of town could Horsham become and how this strategy could be a lever of change. After ongoing discussion with workshop attendees and particularly Council, Councillors and the Horsham Parking Consultative and Advisory Committee we began to look at additional ways to improve Horsham as a town and utilise its relatively compact inner residential core and CBD grid. Horsham's unique 4km walkable catchment is a remarkable asset that needs to be better utilised. There is a genuine opportunity to alter the way people choose to move around the town and importantly access the CBD, work, school or other daily engagements. Residents can easily access the destinations they need for their daily lives through walking or cycling but they opt to use private vehicle because they can, and in fact are encouraged to do so. It is difficult to alter the travel behaviour of an individual when their habits have become so engrained. This is even more so the case when there is a high degree of certainty for parking the CBD. That is, a resident is guaranteed an available parking space in the CBD, or at multiple locations throughout the CBD. This means that residents will travel by car without even considering other modes. This behaviour was echoed during all workshops as we worked through some of the ongoing issues and the inextricable link between travel behaviour and parking management.

The concept of 'Horsham: A walkable rural city' was born from conversations with local community and stakeholders and observations garnered from immersion in the town's walkable built form. 'Horsham: A walkable rural city' is an aspiration built on transitioning the way people perceive mobility throughout the town. It is an opportunity to exploit what is great about the town to become more prosperous and interesting. Horsham is endowed with the right attributes to achieve this: a walkable inner urban grid; a variety of built form; a residential walkable catchment; and a proud community. There is a genuine opportunity to achieve this, something that will make Horsham a leader in its own right, while opening up the town to further investment, development and innovation.

Walkable streets are the foundation of a great city or town and people will always form the central focus of an interesting, active and vibrant street. Council's all over Australia and indeed the world are making concerted efforts to reclaim vital inner urban and central streets for the primary use of pedestrian activity instead of vehicle movement. This approach continues to prove more valuable as the focus of people and the environment that human activity creates delivers a stronger economic and social return as opposed to roads that simply transport people from A to B.

Figure 1: Horsham: A walkable rural city



2 Strategic rationale for car parking and land use

A successful town centre can succeed by investing in its natural competitive advantage – its connection to the community, its sense of place, its authenticity, history, aesthetics, diversity, and unique local traders.

There is no stronger indication of a town centres ill health than if a resident can drive to the main street, park directly outside or very close to their destination, carry out their task and then drive and park very close to their next destination. Main street traders rely on foot traffic, inviting pedestrians through the door, and incidental sales, however when patrons drive between town centre destinations traders are stripped of the chance to engage potential customers with interesting, enticing shopfronts, and the town inevitably loses much of its vibrancy. The key for town centre prosperity is when people walk or bike to town, or park once on the periphery and walk around the centre to each of their destinations. This behaviour results in more activity and people spending more time (and hence money) in town. In fact, shopping centres rely on this same model for success – patrons park once and walk and footfall is generated past as many shopfronts as possible.

Parking surveys undertaken in December 2016 indicate that the supply of parking is so plentiful that the levels of pedestrian and bike riding activity in town will be minimal. Providing such an oversupply of parking is not only expensive for Council and developers, it is contributing to a decline in retail competitiveness and town centre activity.

The best way to correct this parking oversupply is to remove the minimum parking rates in the interim for development in the town centre, allowing the parking supply rate to gradually decline over time as development occurs. However it is understood that due to an oversupply of car parking in Horsham, Council has been approving development applications with reduced provision of car parking or simply waiving car parking requirements on an ad-hoc basis. While these practices are condoned, there needs to be a long-term strategy set in place to manage car parking through both policy settings and statutory tools to ensure the parking environment is managed effectively and sustainably as the CBD develops and evolves over time.

2.1.1 What do we want the Horsham City Centre to look like?

The Municipal Parking Strategy will be of value if it can effectively work towards creating the sort of city centre the community wants. It forms part of a planning framework that seeks to guide future development towards desired outcomes for Horsham and the region, and its purpose is to ensure that parking policy supports these broad visions for the area. The basis of this strategy is therefore, what do we want the Horsham City Centre to look like, and how can this Strategy most effectively help achieve this outcome?

To guide the preparation of this report, MRCagney have focused on the following broad aspirational targets for the Horsham City Centre:

- Create a compact and walkable urban form
- Fundamentally support and cultivate pedestrian traffic above other transport modes
- Strategically exploit the town's walking catchment – currently three quarters live in the urban area of Horsham
- Create an urban form that supports an interesting built form and public realm;
- Create streets for people
- Create a bicycle friendly city centre
- Invite the development of an eclectic mix of retail, commercial and residential uses
- Create a city centre that does not require multiple car trips throughout the precinct, instead allowing pedestrian flow through
- Provide parking based on industry best practice.

2.2 Car parking policy considerations

Understanding the myriad impacts posed by poorly managed car parking is a critical first step in development of effective parking policy and strategy development. To respond to these issues effectively, we begin by asking some simple questions about car parking and how it relates to the broader Horsham environment.

2.2.1 What is car parking?

Cities, towns and suburbs bring together a diverse range of different land uses which all generate and attract varying levels of access for patrons, customers, visitors, residents and staff. A bi-product of this access is created through a 'trip' which can be made by a variety of modes, most commonly through use of private vehicle, public transport, cycling or walking. Operating a private vehicle remains the most commonly used mode of transport in Australia, and it is also the most resource-intensive mode. The price of petrol and the impact of fossil fuels on the environment aside, the use of private vehicles demands vast space for operation and parking. Every trip that begins with a car, must end by using an end of trip facility and often the cost of developing and/or maintaining these facilities is overlooked.

Different land uses generate different amounts of trips therefore statutory standards are required to set the appropriate level of car parking supply to meet the respective demand for each land use. Certain land uses generate greater demand at different times of the day while other land uses benefit from location and can generate more trips from pedestrian trips and general foot traffic but provide very little car parking.

Standard parking provision involves:

- On-street parking
- Individually, on each development site
- Off-street parking facilities

Car parking is often considered free by users but the construction and maintenance costs are passed on through other means, for example through development costs (higher real estate prices), or the costs of goods and services. Additionally, the land that is set aside for the provision of abundant car parking is also something that is often overlooked by the common user. This land is invariably more valuable when used as community space or for commercial uses which generate jobs and economic development.

Best practice approaches to parking management refers to the policies and programs that support optimal and efficient use of existing parking resources. This approach assesses the built form and transport system holistically to ensure that car parking can *support* rather than detract from creating a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre or city environment.

2.2.2 Understanding parking policy

There is growing interest in the impacts of parking on transport and land use outcomes. Parking is clearly an essential component for supporting private vehicle travel, however it can also be expensive to provide, if only by virtue of the large amounts of space that it requires. Under-priced parking may also stimulate vehicle travel and contribute to growing congestion. Without a rational approach to car parking policy, other key strategic plans cannot be effectively utilised and land use objectives not achieved to their optimal net community benefit.

Parking policy in regional settings involves a different approach to metropolitan contexts however is still required to be managed sustainably and efficiently with full regard to broader considerations including modal shift, land use change and retail growth.

Council must therefore provide the correct supply of parking, correctly priced, consistent with the desired transport and land use objectives for the Horsham CBD.

2.2.3 The role of parking management in a sustainable transport system

Effective parking management is a critical policy tool for achieving sustainable transport objectives. There is growing international interest in the impacts of parking on transport and land use outcomes.

Parking policy reform can support broader objectives for a high quality urban realm, and when managed well, can deliver positive social and economic outcomes for the municipality, its people, and local business. An effective parking management regime typically:

- Focuses on achieving **efficient utilisation** of parking resources via a range of management tools such as hourly or daily pricing, permits, time limits, and parking enforcement;
- **Prioritises the needs of specific users**, such as people with disabilities, delivery vehicles or contractors;
- **Provides information** to users, eg through parking guidance on access roads and straightforward rules for users; and
- **Enables flexibility and sharing**, eg to adjust parking management or availability in response to changes in demand or special event requirements.

Efficient parking utilisation is an especially important contributor to support vibrant urban environments. An important aim for parking management is to keep parking occupancy at a high but not fully occupied level that ensures that:

- Parking spaces are well used, meaning that parking is supporting accessibility for users in a town centre environment;
- People can still easily find a space, reducing user frustration and the potential for parking spillover into adjacent areas.
- Parking is conveniently available within a town centre to an extent where a driver is encouraged to park once and walk, rather than carry out multiple trips throughout the centre with ease.

A common policy recommendation is to target a utilisation level of 75%-85%, meaning that around one in seven spaces is empty and available for users at any given time.¹ When parking occupancy rises significantly above this level it becomes difficult for users to find a space, requiring them to circle around to search for parking, time their trips earlier to avoid the rush, or park on nearby residential streets. Conversely, when occupancy sits at a range below 75%, it is considered that there is an oversupply of parking, suggesting that the space designated for parking could be better used for other purposes.

In Section 4 of this report we present the findings of the occupancy surveys in the Horsham CBD.

2.2.4 The role of paid parking

Paid parking is currently operational in selected locations in the Horsham CBD. Council should define its policy rationale for paid parking, detailing that paid parking:

- is used to assist in allocating scarce kerbside space or off-street parking spaces to higher-value users, particularly in locations with high demand for parking or high potential for alternative uses of space (eg for expanded footpaths or alternative land uses);

¹ For a discussion of the empirical rationale for this ratio, see Shoup, D. 2005. *The High Cost of Free Parking*. APA Planners Press. For an example of how it can be implemented in practice, see Auckland Transport. 2015. *Parking Strategy*.

- to increase turnover of users in areas near to retail and hospitality strips with potential benefits to traders from higher sales from an increased customer base;
- to reduce externality costs associated with over-provision of un-priced parking including traffic congestion from 'cruising' for parking spaces;
- to support broader transport policy objectives, including mode shift towards walking and cycling;
- to ensure the costs of providing facilities for drivers/ parking users are borne by these users;
- to recover costs of providing parking facilities and to provide a signal to users about the value of publicly-owned parking spaces in high-demand locations;
- to recoup costs and redistribute the funds to important CBD infrastructure and civic projects.

2.3 Land use considerations for Horsham

In this section, we look at important core attributes of town centre environments and other factors to consider that are associated with car parking and must be managed carefully. This includes considerations related to broader land use solutions that would benefit a town like Horsham.

2.3.1 Integrating land use

Appropriate land use is the key to creating a sustainable Horsham. Low density, single use development patterns are unsustainable because they place trip origins and destinations too far apart, necessitating car travel. Accommodating this type of travel behaviour is not only expensive, but it is incompatible with prosperous, vibrant, and walkable town centre environments.

If Horsham is to accommodate growth in a way that improves prosperity and the quality of life of its citizens, a more diverse mix of medium-density development needs to be permitted in the town centre. Accommodating such growth will require zoning for mixed-use development, removing or lowering minimum parking rates, and permitting appropriate medium density heights and building forms. The CAD report presented a set of objectives that are closely aligned to this approach including maintaining a compact and integrated CBD, supporting on-going growth and development of the retail and commercial sector in the Horsham CBD and ensuring that Firebrace Street remains the traditional 'main-street' in Horsham.

The Municipal Car Parking Strategy will support a move in this direction while other strategies aimed at rejuvenating and activating the CBD are taking shape concurrently, however to further support the gradual integration of land use through densification and regeneration, there will need to be further amendments of the Horsham Planning Scheme. Proposed Planning Scheme Amendments to introduce a Parking Overlay will be explored in conjunction with a review of the CAD Strategy.

2.3.2 Pedestrians

The way pedestrians are treated is the key predictor of a town's prosperity and liveliness. Regional town centres cannot be competitive without clearly inviting the most accessible, environmentally friendly, safest, and least subsidised way of moving around. Making pedestrians feel comfortable and welcome is an essential ingredient of all successful towns, and no other transport mode contributes as much to the health of a small community in terms of casual social interaction, retail visibility, passive surveillance, physical activity, and mental wellbeing.

However pedestrian activity is also the transport mode most reliant on good land use and transport planning. Pedestrian trips cannot occur when origins and destinations are too far apart, and complimentary land uses (e.g. residential and retail/commercial) are segregated; nor will people choose to be pedestrians, even when travel distances are feasible, if they are not provided an accessible, comfortable, safe, and accommodating environment. Furthermore, there are several roundabouts in the Horsham town centre which supports a

constant flow of vehicles further impeding on pedestrian amenity and safety. Some improved crossing opportunities would improve the ability for pedestrians to cross more freely and safely, something that should be considered in future town centre works.

Horsham, unlike many Australian communities that have typically supported the outwards expansion of their residential populations, has retained its traditional inner core, which can be attributed to some extent in the town's success in avoiding the lure of 'big box' fringe development. This outcome could have been fortuitous or achieved by chance or by lack of market interest, however Council still needs to applaud itself with its involvement in this outcome and should recognise the value associated with retaining commercial and retail activity in town centre environments as opposed to peripheral locations.

2.3.3 Bike Riding

Increasing the attractiveness of bike riding as a safe and practical mode of transport is a huge opportunity for Horsham given that a large part of the population live within close proximity to the CBD. Bike riding is the cheapest mode of transport other than walking to accommodate, both in terms of user and Council spend, and bike riders are typically a lucrative user group for main street retailers to engage in terms of dollars spent per user in a given time period. It is economically vital that all citizens get access to genuine bike riding facilities.

Riding a bike opens up a 4-5 km catchment within a 20 minute ride, which means the Horsham CBD is accessible via bicycle for the majority of Horsham residents. However, there are few safe and inviting routes for people to ride their bike unless they are confident and experienced riders. Wide roads enable unnecessarily high vehicle speeds for a town centre and roundabouts pose significant safety concerns for cyclists. This is reflected by findings in the *Horsham Bicycle and Shared Path Plan* which revealed just 174 individuals (2.7% of workers) cycle to work.

Future strategy development around sustainable transport needs to focus on cycling as a mode shift opportunity rather than a leisure or sport scope item. While long-distance cycling as a sport or leisure activity can serve regional benefits, a shift in focus to accommodate safe and accessible cycle routes to the CBD will return greater social, economic, and environmental benefits in the long term.

A network of generous protected on-street bike lanes provided between the kerb and the parking lane permeating throughout the town centre is an achievable way to turn Horsham into a genuinely bike-accessible town. This approach is recommended for a number of reasons:

- The streets of Horsham typically have ample space, allowing protected on-road bike paths to be retrofitted with relative ease without removing traffic or parking lanes (although some on-street parking may need to be reoriented to parallel bays); A trial could test options prior to a permanent network of cycling infrastructure;
- Furthermore, Horsham's wide streets would benefit from some width reduction to support slower traffic speeds and integrate better with the pedestrian realm, creating a dual benefit;
- Protected on-street bike lanes create a clear physical separation between not only cars and people riding bikes, but also pedestrians and bike riders;
- Locating the bike lane between the kerb and the parking lane rather than between the parking lane and the travel lane provides bike riders a real physical barrier to car traffic, forming a proper high quality bike facility suitable for unsupervised primary school aged children.

In addition, maximising accessibility of the bike network requires consideration of the following:

- **Street trees and shade:** introducing some shade through a street tree program will significantly improve the attractiveness of bike riding to a greater proportion of the community. The weather of Horsham, particularly the warm summer months and cold winters, was occasionally suggested to be a barrier to active travel during consultation, and while this is not a characteristic unique to Horsham and should by no means preclude Horsham from achieving an active, walkable and bikeable town centre, it does highlight the need for Council to recognise the role of street trees in cooling the town during the summer which is conducive to a welcoming and comfortable cycling environment.
- **Prioritising school trips:** if children cannot safely ride to school it reflects very poorly on the quality of the town. Retrofitting bike lanes should be prioritised within 2 km of schools in Horsham. Ride to school days could be another option to encourage school-aged children participate in the broader active travel network.
- **End of trip facilities:** some improved end of trip facilities will also make bike riding a more feasible mode of transport for more people in town. Simply providing some additional bike racks, water fountains, maintenance stations and perhaps showers would make riding bikes more a more visible and attractive option. Full provision of bicycle end of trip facilities should be adhered to via Clause 52.34 of the Horsham Planning Scheme.
- **Intersection treatments:** roundabouts are generally incompatible with safe and accessible pedestrian and bike routes, particularly for children, inexperienced or less confident riders. Other road design elements that encourage higher traffic speed, such as slip lanes, are similarly discouraged. Street design approaches typically reflecting dated traffic engineering ideologies have attributed to a poor pedestrian realm, according to the CAD Strategy, therefore now could be the right time to genuinely look at alternative approaches.
- **Surface Quality:** providing smooth, clean, and stable surface for bike lanes is important to make bike riders feel safe and welcome. Improper maintenance or poor construction that leaves bike lanes with an inconsistent surface or littered with loose stones are common faults in many towns that can discourage bike use.
- **Avoid unsuitable road elements:** Quality bike infrastructure needs to be free of roundabouts, slip lanes and other road geometry that reinforces high traffic speed and implicit priority of car traffic.

Figure 2 below was taken in Horsham in June 2016, however has likely been upgraded/removed yet remains a relevant image as it depicts cycling in Horsham as not a particularly well supported mode of transport. The bike rack is clearly tired and does little to encourage use. End of trip facilities, in the form of new and useable bike racks would need to be introduced to the CBD if cycling was to become a priority mode of transport.

Figure 2: bike parking facilities in central Horsham, 2016



2.3.4 Street design

Horsham is fortunate to have retained a vibrant grid network of CBD streets which is conducive for walking and general pedestrian activity, but this is also reduced by the large street block dimensions and the difficulty of safe pedestrian movement through wide intersections. The CAD Strategy identified changes to the pedestrian environment which have occurred over time revealing considerable change in approach to street design since 2001, including the introduction of roundabouts at intersections, off-set pedestrian crossing points, and extensive centre-of-road and angle parking. These traffic interventions do not foster an amenable pedestrian environment and reflect out of date traffic management approaches, which are largely responsible for the current oversupply of parking in Horsham and the ease of vehicular movements throughout the CBD.

However there have been some positive achievements of street design in Horsham recently. Roberts Avenue is a good example. Extension of the kerb and removal of car parking space have supported adjacent cafés/restaurants by providing extra space to expand their outdoor/dining arrangements while more broadly incorporating features that invite pedestrians to stay longer and linger.

2.3.5 Private Cars

Appropriately dealing with private cars in town will have a determining impact on the future viability of Horsham as a desirable place to live and visit. At present, the balance between road space and space for people to walk, meet and stay is adequate however could be improved. Roberts Avenue is a positive example

of the appropriate interventions that should be employed on a larger scale. The footpaths here have been widened resulting in the possibility of extending alfresco dining for the restaurants present in the street.

It is understandable that some residents of a regional centre such as Horsham cite the natural absence of traffic congestion as a positive characteristic of living where they do, and there is a temptation for Council to try to engineer a congestion-free future for the town as any new development happens. However, a quality destination returns more value to the community than an unimpeded journey, even more so for a regional town like Horsham where tourism plays a significant role. People visit towns to be pedestrians. They want to wander, browse, and take in everything their new surroundings have to offer. The better the town centre, the more time and money visitors will spend in town.

Council needs to invest in maximising the pedestrian experience in Horsham for the long-term benefit and viability of the town. This inevitably means that driving and parking in Horsham will need to be addressed in order to make rationale and evidence-backed decisions because it is not possible to create a high-quality town centre without taking some space away from cars to create a better pedestrian realm. If Horsham is ready to embark upon such a process, the town will be richer for it.

3 Review of current car parking practices in Victoria

3.1 Statutory practices

In this section we detail the statutory mechanisms that Council could consider in its management of parking through the Victorian Planning System as well as some management approaches that would support the management of on-street car parking in the Horsham CBD.

A range of parking solutions are available to Horsham through statutory measures via amendments to the Horsham Planning Scheme as well as some general parking management approaches that Council could consider to support optimal and sustainable parking practices. It is understood that Horsham Rural City Council will explore potential introduction of a parking overlay when it reviews and updates the *Horsham CAD Strategy*.

3.1.1 Minimum Parking Rates

Within the state of Victoria, the management of provision of parking is controlled through the Victoria Planning Provisions which is administered by the Department of Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). Applicable parking rates are set under Clause 52.06 in each planning scheme which is a consistent state-wide framework.

Clause 52.06 Car Parking sets out the minimum numbers of spaces which apply to a variety of different uses and must be provided, which can be viewed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Parking rates for a variety of uses

Use	Rate Column A Applies the standard rate to all zones	Rate Column B Only applies where specified to the Parking Overlay	Car Parking Measure Column C
Cinema based entertainment restaurant	0.3	0.3	To each patron permitted
Convenience Restaurant	0.3		To each patron permitted
		3.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Food & drink premises other than listed in this table	4	3.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Hotel	0.4		To each patron permitted
		3.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor
Medical Centre	5		To the first person providing health services plus

	3		To every other person providing health services
		3.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Motel	1	1	To each unit, and one to each manager dwelling, plus 50 per cent of the relevant requirement of any ancillary use
Office other than listed in this table	3.5	3	To each 100 sq m of net floor area
Restaurant	0.4		To each patron permitted
		3.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Restricted retail premises	3	2.5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Supermarket	5	5	To each 100 sq m of leasable floor area
Dwelling	1	1	To each one or two bedroom dwelling, plus
	2	2	To each three or more bedroom dwelling (with studies or studios that are separate rooms counted as a bedrooms) plus
	1	0	For visitors to every 5 dwellings for developments of 5 or more dwellings

3.1.2 Cash-in-lieu of parking

A cash-in-lieu of parking arrangement can be introduced to the Horsham Planning Scheme through a parking overlay. This would allow Horsham Rural City Council to tailor its parking provision requirement to the local context, taking into consideration the low parking occupancy that exists in the town due to an oversupply of car parking across the CBD.

A cash-in-lieu scheme allows financial contributions to be made where it is not possible to provide the required amount of car parking on-site. Requirements for a financial contribution must be justified and address the core principles of need, nexus, accountability and equity in the strategic assessment of the proposal before it is introduced. For example, Greater Bendigo and Colac Otway have cash in lieu rates of \$10,000 and \$13,000 respectively adopted in 2012.

Consideration of implementation of a Parking Overlay to set up a cash-in-lieu scheme will be considered with a future review of the Horsham CAD Strategy. A further study including justification will be required to determine if and how much a cash-in-lieu contribution would apply in Horsham.

3.1.3 Parking management tools

Effective parking management is a critical policy tool for achieving sustainable transport objectives. There is growing international interest in the impacts of parking on transport and land use outcomes. Parking is clearly an essential component for supporting private vehicle travel, however it can also be expensive to provide due to the large amounts of space that it requires. Under-priced parking may also stimulate vehicle travel and contribute to growing congestion.

The below table summarises parking management tools commonly used in on-street parking environments and suitable contexts for their application.

Table 3: Parking management tools and appropriate contexts for implementation

	Description	Suitable context for implementation
Unrestricted parking	Parking is made available to users for free, with no time restrictions or other limitations	Areas with low occupancy/ parking demand (e.g. low-density residential streets).
Time-restricted parking	Parking is made available to users for free, with a maximum time limit for stays	Areas with high demand and where higher parking turnover has benefits (e.g. shopping areas, commercial centres)
Reserved parking	Parking is reserved for specific types of users, such as loading zones, mobility card holders, taxis, or local residents	Locations where access to streetside destinations by particular users is important (e.g. loading bays)
Priced parking	Users must pay to park, with rates that may vary by length of stay or time of use.	Locations with high demand for parking and high occupancy or areas of high traffic congestion where there may be benefits from reducing cruising activity (e.g. dense commercial centres).

3.1.4 Time restrictions

Time restrictions are effective management tools that aim to encourage turnover of parking spaces to ensure those who require parking bays to access the goods and services they require can do so conveniently.

3.1.5 Paid Parking vs Free Parking

The provision of paid parking spaces compared to free parking is often a contentious topic and one that naturally generates significant discussion from diverse segments of the business and resident community of any town. Most people favour free parking because they believe it is simply that, 'free', however free parking does not take into consideration the real cost that Council incurs including maintenance, construction and enforcement. Paid parking ensures Council has the revenue to recoup the operating cost of its parking supply and also assists in the enforcement of restrictions.

Paid parking is one of a range of parking management tools that Council can use to manage demand for on-street and off-street parking. Paid parking can be an effective tool, but is only appropriate in particular places.

While paid on-street parking may be an effective management tool in busy town centres or shopping strips, in other contexts, other tools may be more suitable.

Free parking can stimulate unnecessary demand and lead to poor parking outcomes including long-term stays. This outcome should be avoided through time restrictions or paid parking.

In the Horsham CBD, paid parking is available at a charge of \$1 per hour with varied time restrictions, however the car park located between Pynsent St & Roberts Avenue east of Darlot Street (Known as Forty Winks Car Park) is metered at a cost of 80 cents per hour with maximum of \$4.60 per day.

In financial year 2015/16 parking meters and fines in Horsham generated \$610,614 with an expenditure of \$190,565. Expenditure only relates to direct costs attributed to parking meters, and does not include ancillary costs, such as corporate overheads relating to the Community Safety Unit.

Parking revenue raised by Council is required to be used in a way that serves a net community benefit. This could be through tree planting, landscaping and other street beautification and revitalising works including associated design and planning. Importantly, Council is required to communicate clearly and transparently to ensure the community is fully aware and understands the difference between parking meter revenue and general rates. It is critical that Council can achieve this efficiently to avoid growing suspicion and angst towards Council within the community.

Funds derived from parking meters in Horsham are added to the CBD and Car Park Development Reserve Fund which is used for landscaping works throughout the CBD. Funds derived are not used for car park development but instead used broadly across the town centre for landscaping and infrastructure upgrades. Recent works completed using these funds include landscaping in Firebrace Street, Darlot Street, and Pynsent Street; footpath widening; laneway improvements; relocating power lines underground and developing car parks on the periphery. It is critical that these positive outcomes are effectively communicated to the community to emphasise the true value of parking meter revenue.

3.1.6 Long term parking versus short term parking

Parking restrictions are a vital management tool to ensure local business can adequately accommodate its clientele. When managed effectively through the setting of appropriate time restrictions, on-street parking can support adjacent land uses and contribute to the competitiveness of small-scale retail given the convenience associated with providing parking within an appropriate distance to local business and other attractions. Fundamentally, this outcome can only be fulfilled through the setting of appropriate time restrictions that encourage regular turnover whilst maintaining high occupancy throughout the day. As such, medium-term or all-day parking is not suited to main-street activity centres like Horsham because it restricts access and doesn't encourage turnover. Instead, longer term demands can be sufficiently satisfied in more peripheral locations, which there are ample of in Horsham.

4 Existing Car Parking Conditions

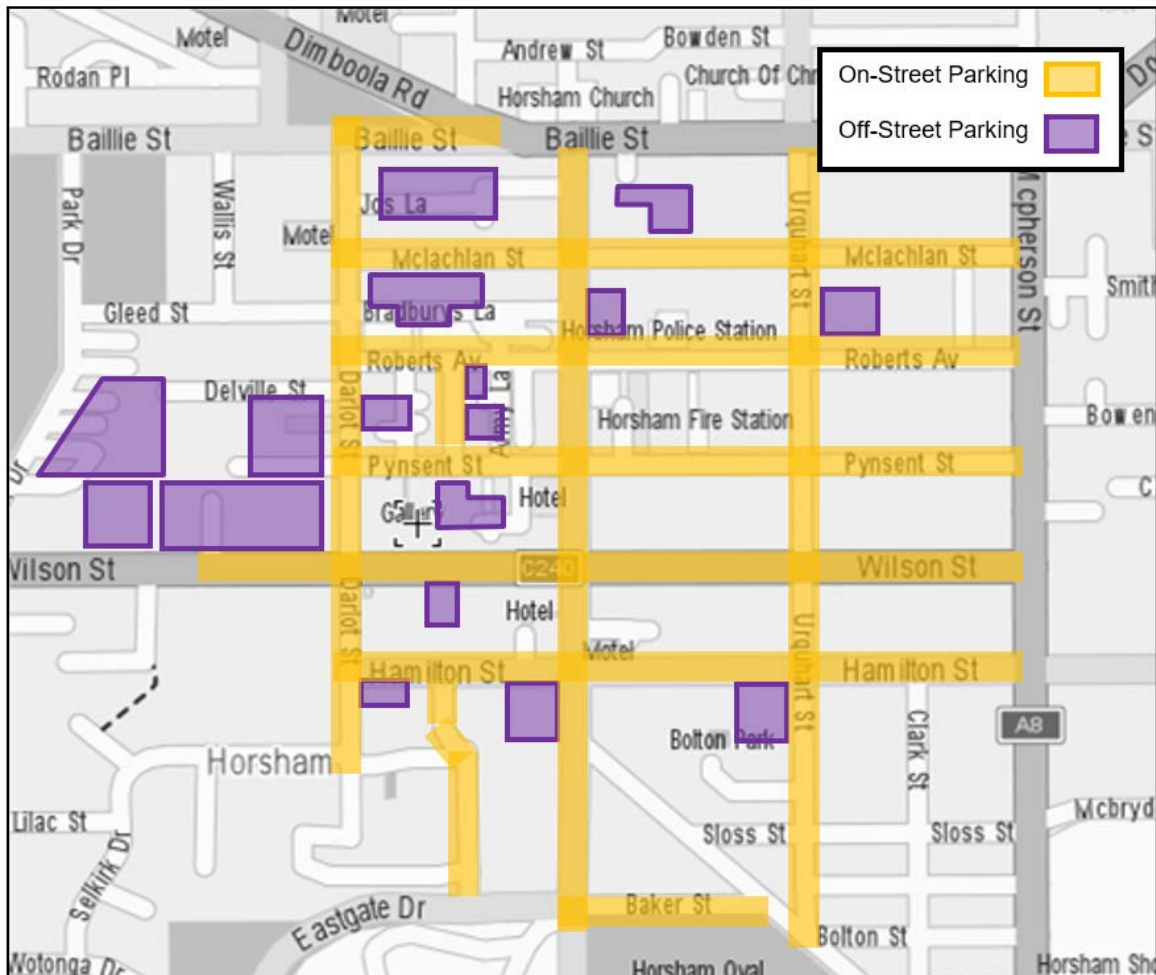
The demand for car parking throughout the Horsham CBD is generated from a variety of different activities and land use types. Residents, employees and visitors to the CBD have a wide range of parking choice through both on-street and off-street parking, paid on-street parking, time-restricted and unrestricted on-street parking.

4.1 Existing Parking Provisions

Cardno conducted an occupancy survey of the Horsham CBD in December 2016. The survey recorded the use of a total of 3,508 car parking spaces within the survey area, comprising 1,575 on-street spaces and 1,933 off-street spaces, but, unintentionally, did not include the use of the Target car park (156 spaces) located on the north side of Wilson Street between Arthur Street and Park Drive.

The below map displays the study area for the Strategy outlining parking inventory within the study area for on-street and off-street parking.

Figure 3: Study map area car parking inventory



4.2 Occupancy surveys

Occupancy surveys were completed on Friday 9 December 2016 by Nationwide Traffic Surveys under instructions from Cardno, to record the utilisation of car parking spaces available for public use, within the Horsham central business area.

The findings reveal that parking occupancy is relatively low throughout the study area and doesn't exceed 70% at any time of the day, instead sitting at a range between 45-65%. This level of occupancy is considered very low for a central activity centre like the Horsham CBD and confirms there is a significant oversupply of car parking in Horsham.

The below table illustrates parking occupancy for the study area on December 9 2016 revealing peak demand for CBD parking occurs at midday. There is no real defining peculiarity when comparing on and off-street parking which suggests paid parking is inelastic, or users do not comply to paid restrictions.

Notwithstanding the legitimacy of these assumptions, the overall level of occupancy is very low for a town of Horsham's size. This implies that parking is widely available and conveniently located for those who frequent the CBD providing the option to make multiple car trips throughout the CBD to access the goods and services required, rather than parking once then making those same trips solely on foot.

Figure 4: Occupancy rates in Horsham CBD

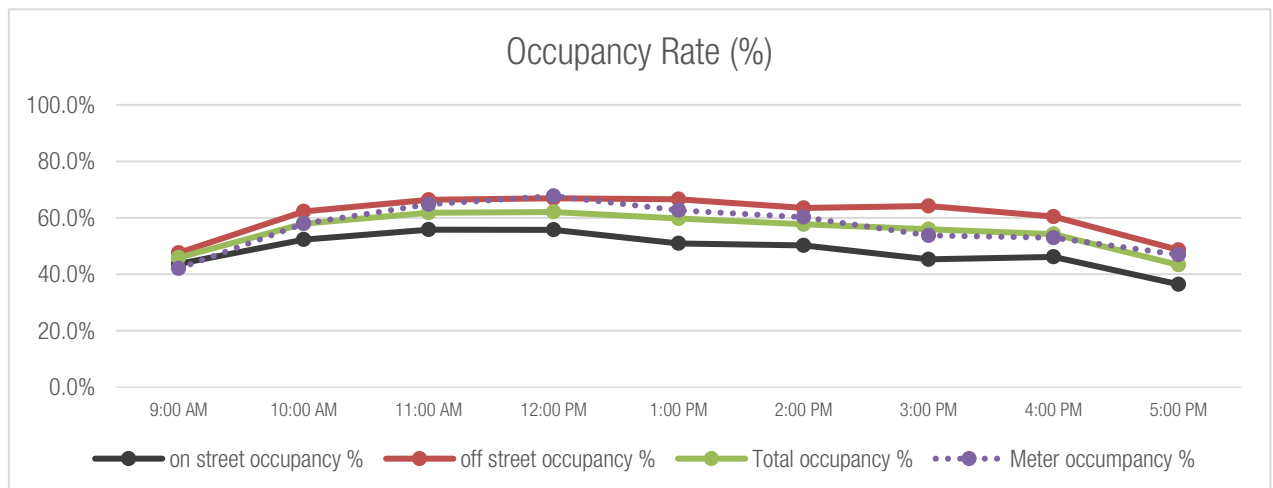
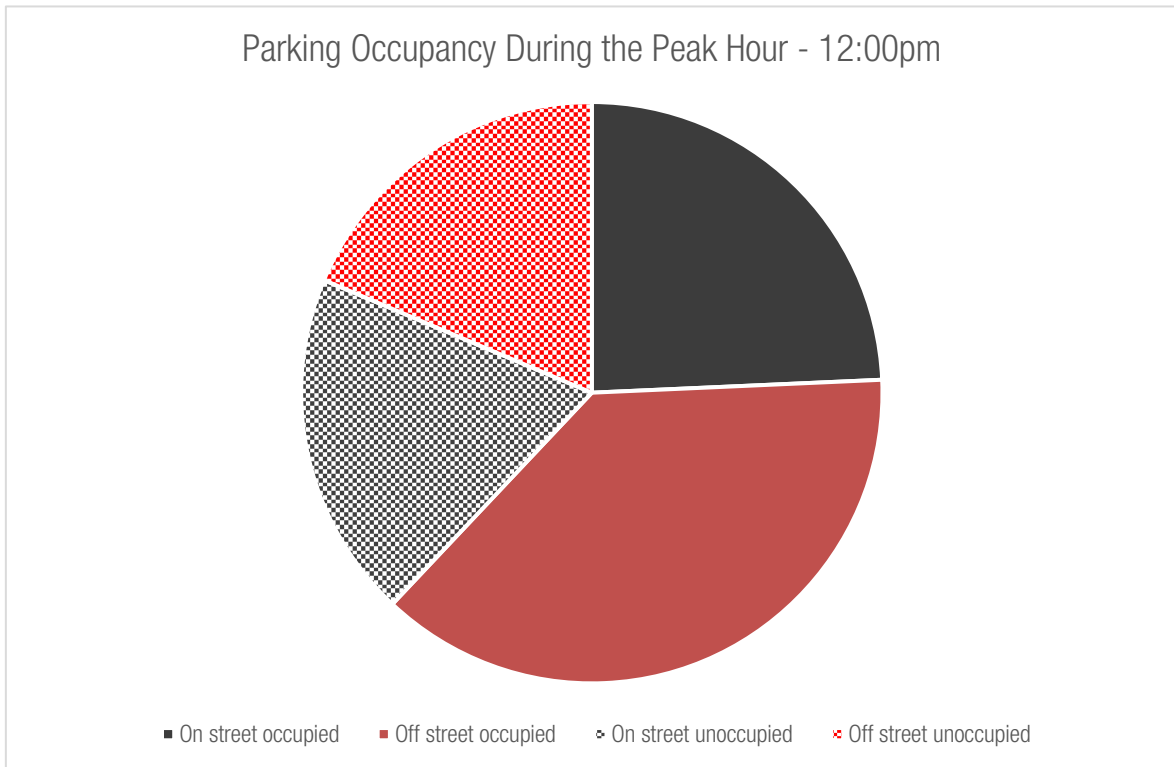


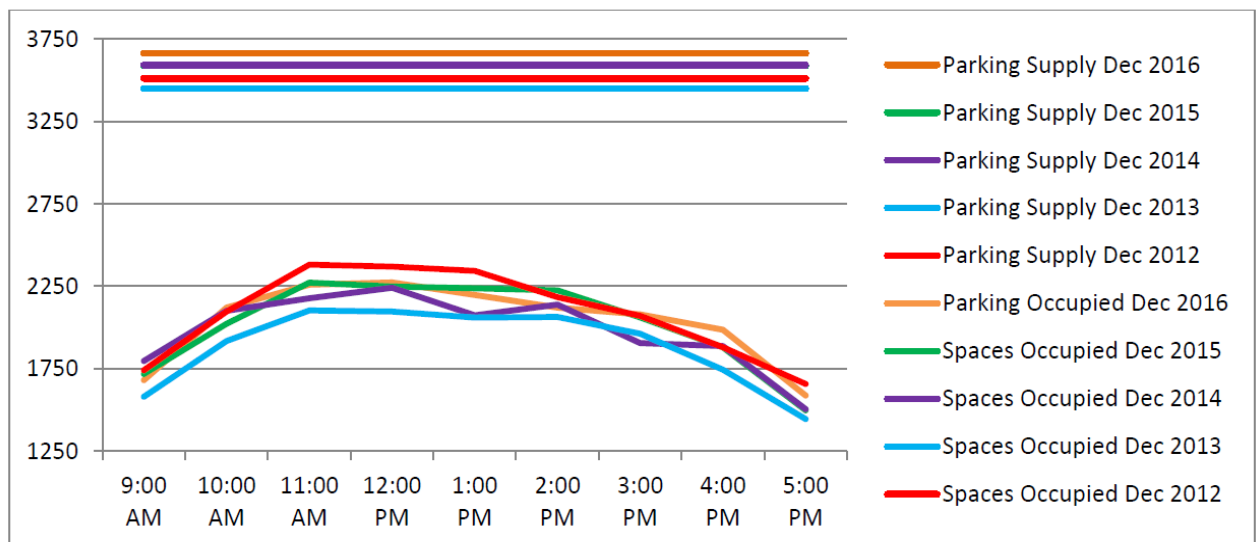
Figure 5: Peak hour occupancy pie chart



The above pie chart illustrates the parking conditions as they relate to occupancy during the peak demand period at 12pm. Revealed in this chart is strong evidence that demand for parking spaces in the CBD is very manageable with an abundant excess of available parking space during the peak demand period.

It is also noteworthy that fewer than 1,391 car parking spaces in the Horsham central business area, were vacant and therefore available for public use, at all times.

Figure 6: Parking Occupancy (on-street & off-street, total survey area)



Source: Cardno, 2016 car parking surveys and analysis

Figure 6 illustrates annual changes in total parking occupancy between the years 2012 and 2016. Parking occupancy was the highest in 2012 when parking supply totalled 3512. Since 2012, there has been an

increase in parking supply by approximately 150 (including the Target car park) while parking demand has largely remained consistent during the same period.

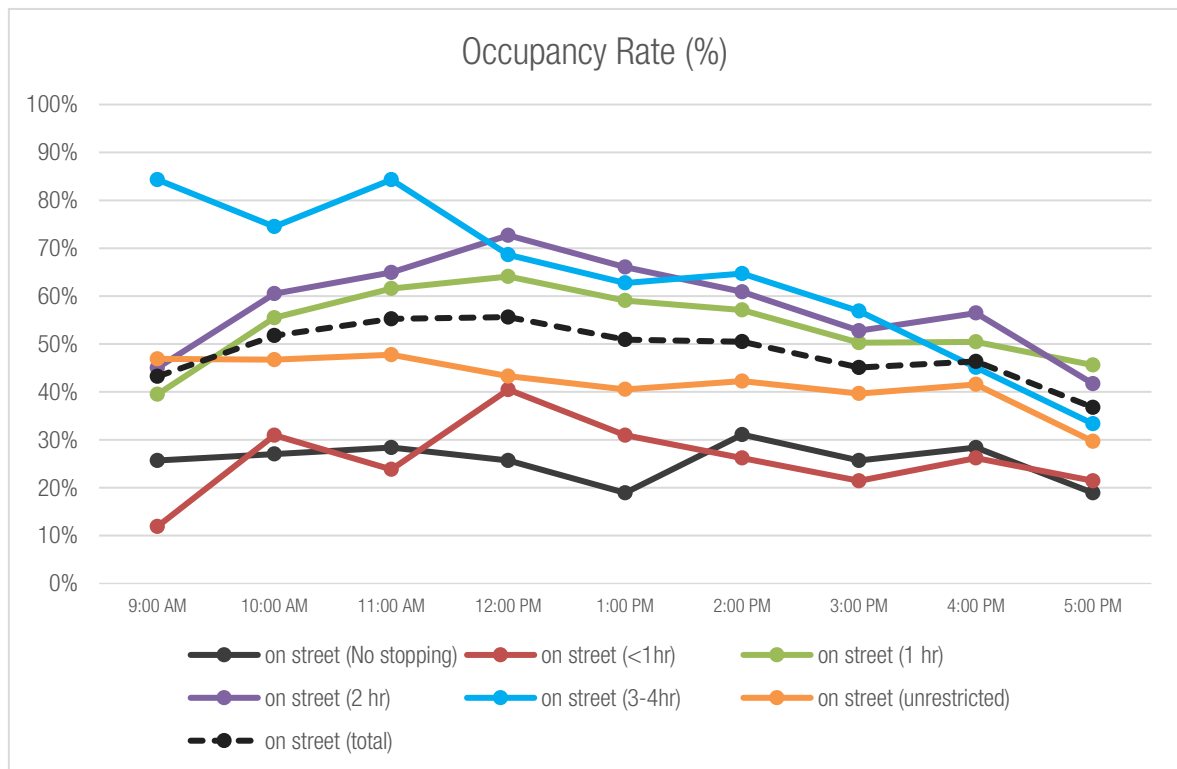
4.2.1 Total on-street occupancy

Figure 7 below illustrates the various occupancy levels of all on-street parking spaces across each time restriction. It identifies that, while general occupancy is low across the study area, each time restriction experiences different outcomes, which raises the question as to whether the time restrictions are serving their optimal purpose.

Interestingly, 4P parking experiences the highest occupancy of any time restriction suggesting that there are not enough 4P spaces available. Demand peaks at 9am, which could be a result of a ‘first in best dressed’ scenario where employees and other visitors secure 4P parking for the morning peak before switching to other options in the afternoon. Interestingly, 4P consists of both paid and un-paid options, which could imply the ‘free’ spaces are highly sought after.

1P is well utilised however there is greater demand for 2P which exceeds 70% at midday and sits above 60% between 10am and 2pm.

Figure 7: Total on street parking occupancy

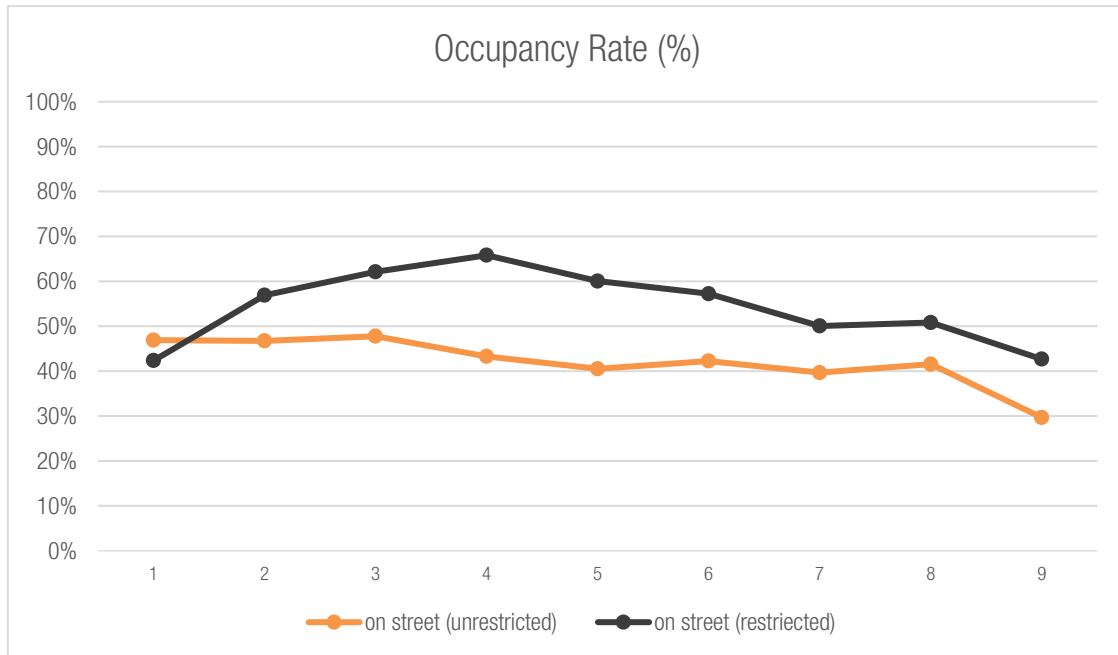


4.2.2 Restricted and un-restricted on-street car parking

Figure 8 below displays on-street parking occupancy in the study area, revealing restricted spaces experience greater demand than unrestricted spaces throughout the day. Unrestricted spaces do not exceed 50% occupancy at any stage of the day suggesting that the location of unrestricted car parking is not as highly sought after as restricted parking. Conversely, restricted parking experiences greater demand which infers motorists are not willing to park at unrestricted locations on the periphery of the CBD and then walk to their destination, because they are guaranteed a parking space at a central and conveniently located CBD location.

This also suggests that users are not averse to paying for parking, or alternatively, users do not comply to enforcement.

Figure 8: Restricted and un-restricted on street car parking



4.2.3 Special needs parking and short-term time restricted parking

Special needs parking including loading zones, disabled parking and taxi zones experience an appropriate level of occupancy in the Horsham CBD, as does short term parking (P10,P15 mins and P1/2P). The survey reveals there is no current demand pressure for each parking zone or restriction, suggesting that visitors to the CBD who require special needs or short-term parking are not inconvenienced.

4.2.4 Occupancy conclusion and key findings

Analysis of the results of the December 2016 Horsham CBD parking surveys reinforces the thinking that car parking in Horsham is plentiful, affirming a significant oversupply of parking. This study revealed that there has been no significant change to either the peak parking accumulation within the Horsham CBD, or the variations to the parking accumulation levels in the Horsham CBD during a typical (busy) day, from those recorded in December 2014 and December 2013.

The peak parking accumulation of 2,273 vehicles was recorded for the surveys area as a whole which equated to a peak occupancy level of 62%, i.e. more than 1 of every 3 parking spaces was vacant at all times. This is significantly lower to the best practice benchmark level of 75% which is advised in regional settings, where 3 of 4 parking spaces are occupied at any given time.

Results confirm that the total parking supply in the Horsham CBD is sufficient to accommodate all parking demands (subject to the suitability of the applicable parking restrictions for particular users) therefore it should be stressed that there is very little need or value in investing further in car parking infrastructure.

4.3 Other parking considerations

Here we look at other considerations as they relate to the parking environment of the study area which include some currently employed management approaches, previously flagged parking interventions and projects, and some other options.

4.3.1 Multi deck Car Park

Development of a stand-alone multi-decked car parking facility in central Horsham has been flagged in the past as a possible project to be undertaken by Council to increase parking supply in the CBD. It was anticipated that construction of a facility of this size would cost at least \$20,000 per space including land value with management and operational costs set at approximately \$400 per space each year. It was estimated that approximately \$2000 per bay over a 300-day cycle would be required for the facility to remain financially viable. With management, land and maintenance costs factored into the price, the required fee per car space would need to be set at \$9 per day, a rate that is uncompetitive against other rates in the study area.

Considering there is no current demand for additional CBD parking spaces, as evidenced by the occupancy surveys, there is no value in pursuing this project further simply because it represents a very poor economic return.

4.3.2 Horsham Town Hall

Concerns related to the removal of car parking at the new Town Hall site in central Horsham were voiced during stakeholder engagement seminars. Community members held concerns that the removal of car parking at this site would cause demand pressures in other CBD locations. Occupancy surveys undertaken in 2016 reveal that the availability of parking within 400 m of the Horsham Town Hall in December 2016, was comparable to that recorded during the 2015, 2014 and 2013 surveys with no fewer than 615 spaces (31%) vacant and available for a parking duration of 1 hour or longer, at all times.

It is therefore concluded that the current parking supply within the Horsham CBD and, more specifically, those available for parking durations of 1P or longer, within 400 metres of the site of the Horsham Performing Arts Centre, are more than sufficient to accommodate both existing peak parking demands and those likely to be generated by the future operations of the Horsham Performing Arts Centre.

A note to the Planning Permit for the development states that the applicant develops alternative parking options within the CAD over the next 5 years to 2018, prioritising improvements to parking and systems of parking from the CBD/Car parking reserve.

4.3.3 Horsham Parking Advisory Committee

The Horsham Parking Advisory and Consultative Committee provides non-binding strategic advice and oversight of parking management in Horsham. It's role as Committee is to provide review and recommendations on matters arising from car parking in Horsham including review of current practices, pricing, and dispute management.

The Committee provides important non-binding review of parking management practices, supported by broad representation of members from the community, Councillors and local traders. This ensures thorough review and decision-making processes that are committed to broad objectives as they relate the parking environment present in Horsham.

The Committee is expected to be fully abreast of parking issues present in Horsham and this strategy should be used to inform the group with a greater level of detail in relation to parking occupancy and recommended best practice approaches to car parking management. This will provide effective support to the Committee when it is to respond to parking matters as they arise, including perceived parking demand pressures in the CBD and ongoing pressure from the local business community. Furthermore, this report should solidify the importance of an effective and sustainable parking management regime in the broader CBD context with regard to Council's long-term transport mode shift and revitalisation goals.

4.3.4 Paid parking

Horsham has implemented a paid parking regime to manage on-street CBD parking. According to a Council meeting report from November 2015, parking meters were introduced to serve two objectives:

- To ensure road safety; and
- To maintain traffic flows and turnover.

Furthermore, the paid parking regime was introduced to encourage business activity and growth, improve the local economy and increase the opportunity of short term parking whilst being financially sustainable by encouraging regular turnover of cars, and therefore customers, in and around the Horsham CBD.

The below table provides a summary of parking income accrued since 2010 which indicates parking revenue has remained consistent over this period with very little fluctuation or growth. The parking revenue is also aligned to parking occupancy data which also illustrates very little movement or variation over the same period. While paid parking remains in Horsham, Council can be confident that it will accrue a relatively fixed revenue stream from paid parking into the future.

It is recommended that Council continue to use funds accrued through parking revenue for streetscape upgrades, public realm projects or active travel improvements. Monies accrued should not be used for the development of new car parks due to a general oversupply of parking across CBD locations.

Table 2: Parking revenue

	2015/2016	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Income	\$610,614	\$617,669	\$618,137	\$635,032	\$609,120	\$545,716
Expenditure	\$190,565	\$202,689	\$187,596	\$182,749	\$206,471	\$161,923

Figure 9: Parking meter in Horsham CBD



4.3.5 EasyPark

The EasyPark service provides easy parking solutions for Horsham residents via use of a smart phone application allowing cashless parking transactions. It allows drivers to pay for their parking in a simple, cashless and efficient way through use of the EasyPark smartphone application. It delivers the following solutions in an integrated system:

- Cashless payment through phone parking;
- Virtual permits (for example residential permits); and
- Digital infringement notices and enforcement management.

Currently only 2.4% of meter income is accrued from the EasyPark system in comparison to 97.6% still being made with coin. While the system represents genuine value as an innovative tool to support efficient and effective parking management, poor utilisation of the system raises the question as to whether the system should remain in use, especially given many metropolitan councils are yet to trial such technology.

Stakeholders supported a widely-held view that utilisation of the system is poor. This follows a report by the Parking Advisory Committee which outlined three possible reasons for the poor performance of EasyPark:

- Need to promote app including only paying for time used;
- Registration requirements prior to use of the app; or
- Additional fees incurred by EasyPark that drivers are not subject to when making conventional on-street meter payments.

Given poor utilisation of this service, Council should reevaluate EasyPark as a management tool either to improve the level of use (through marketing or awareness) or phase the service out and recoup costs associated with operating it (if any).

5 Recommendations and next steps

Here we present a list of recommendations that Council should consider moving forward to improve the parking environment in the Horsham CBD in line with Council's broader strategic goals.

5.1 Statutory Recommendations

5.1.1 Parking overlay

It is recommended that Council consider implementation of a Parking Overlay as part of the next review of the CAD strategy of which this Strategy will provide context and guidance.

A Parking Overlay is used to facilitate cash-in-lieu payments to be paid in place of providing car parking spaces where it is not possible to provide parking. A future parking overlay should distinguish between applications that involve new development and applications that only involve the changing of uses using existing property/land.

Since the provision of parking in Horsham is oversupplied, it is advised that Council consider options to use funds accrued through a future cash-in-lieu scheme for purposes other than building new car parks, as the current supply adequately meets all demands. Future funds could potentially be used for sustainable transport initiatives or town centre streetscape works.

5.2 Car parking management recommendations

5.2.1 Additional car parking

This report has clearly confirmed that car parking is plentiful in the Horsham CBD which is supported by survey data revealing occupancy fails to reach an appropriate level during the four-hour peak demand period. This unequivocally affirms that there is no further discussion for Council to entertain relating to the need for greater parking supply in Horsham CBD, which may be contrary to some perceptions held by local traders and the wider community.

Parking interventions, which are broadly utilised in response to demand pressures through either paid parking or adjusting time restrictions, are effective tools and are often introduced when occupancy exceeds a certain rate, which varies across municipalities but usually in a range of 75-85%. Introducing new parking, whether that be through private off-street parking or council-operated parking is often the last resort, an option that should only be considered when such interventions have been exhausted. Current occupancy surveys provide a stark reminder that there is a significant oversupply of parking in Horsham and that any community and/or Council discussion regarding increasing supply of parking should be brought to an end as a matter of priority.

5.2.2 Paid parking

Council currently charges parking at a rate of \$1 per hour for on-street parking. This rate is acceptable in that it achieves the main objective of discouraging long-term stays and encouraging regular turnover.

In theory, the parking rate would incrementally shift upwards or downwards in alignment with parking demand. For example, parking precincts in high demand (above 85% occupancy) would charge a higher rate than areas where demand is lower. This puts a premium for highly sought after parking areas while less in-demand areas are available at cheaper rates.

There are currently no circumstances present in the study area that should warrant a review of paid parking rates on the premise to increase hourly rates, therefore the current rate of \$1 per hour should remain.

5.2.3 Parking enforcement

Parking enforcement is recommended to continue on a regular basis throughout the study area. Expanding operations is another option to determine the true extent of parking offences common in the study area.

5.2.4 Horsham: A walkable rural city

This is a bold yet achievable aspiration for a town the size of Horsham which is endowed with the right conditions to support a positive mode shift towards a sustainable movement system. It is understood that Council is enthusiastic to progress with this concept further and is currently underway with some projects that will improve pedestrian conditions and active travel opportunities across the town centre. Both projects should improve the walking environment significantly which is vital to ensure walking can become a widely-utilised form of transport in Horsham. Furthermore, there are some other strategies and important initiatives that Council could consider to support this into the future. These could include:

- An updated sustainable transport strategy with an emphasis on integrating CBD land uses to a broader sustainable transport network, providing radial links into the CBD from the town's residential catchments. On-street safe and protected bike lanes would need to form a centre focus for this project.
- Public realm and urban design projects with a CBD focus could support this goal restoring important central space for people and gathering, while improving the pedestrian network.
- Walk to school programs for school children. Behaviour is formed early so if children begin walking to school from an early age, they will develop positive travel behaviours early. With more children walking, less car trips will be made by parents.
- Reducing supply, whether it be a Council developed initiative or a result from a public realm or infrastructure project, will affect travel behaviour in the future. Current occupancy is very low which is largely due to the oversupply of parking. If this changed incrementally over time, the Horsham mode split would too.

5.2.5 4P Parking

The occupancy survey revealed that there is adequate demand for 4P parking in Horsham. Given that there remains a significant supply of unrestricted parking already available, it is recommended that Council consider strategies to improve utilisation at these sites to satisfy 4P-plus demands. Another option could be to replace some 2P parking with 4P parking, however this is only recommended in side streets or more peripheral locations, not on the CBD's main streets.

5.2.6 Future Engagement

Another round of engagement with stakeholders and the community may well be warranted following adoption of this Strategy to measure its likely benefits and test the community's response, however it is important that Council can remain steadfast through the implementation of the strategy and not succumb to the loudest minorities of the community who may be opposed to some elements of the strategy. Engagement should be about building capacity with the community about how this Strategy can support long-term sustainable growth, not derail or stall progress.

APPENDIX A Review of Key Horsham Strategic Documents

The following documents have been reviewed in preparation of this Strategy for their relevance to Horsham's future car parking objectives and land use priorities. Summaries of each strategy will provide insight into how the Horsham Municipal Parking Strategy relates to other strategies undertaken for Horsham.

Integrated Transport Strategy Interim Report (2016)

Horsham Rural City Council has commenced work on an updated Integrated Transport Strategy which aims to address all common transport modes across the municipality, taking into consideration how transport systems will support the planned growth of the Horsham urban area.

Road Management Plan (2014)

The Horsham Rural City Council Road Management Plan provides guidance to the management of the town's road assets in accordance with the requirements of the Road Management Act 2004, and associated Codes of Practice. This Plan applies to Council's responsible road assets and establishes a framework for the management of the road network to facilitate the coordination of the various uses of road reserves for roadways, pathways, infrastructure and similar purposes.

Key functions of the Road Management Plan include:

- The management system that Council employs for the inspection, maintenance and repair of its roads.
- Inspection standards that document the nature and frequency of different type of inspections (i.e. reactive and proactive).
- Maintenance standards that document intervention level, maintenance response requirements, and maintenance response times.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- The Plan supports a car-based transport system assuming road-based planning including the car parking required to support this approach will remain as a priority for future infrastructure investment and management.

Municipal Bicycle & Shared Path Plan (2012)

The Municipal Bicycle & Shared Path Plan was developed to support Council in the future planning of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. The Plan makes some key recommendations in relation to upgrading key cycling routes and increase maintenance on existing routes as a way to promote cycling and walking as a more attractive and common mode of travel.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- Improved cycling and walking conditions across Horsham following infrastructure upgrades and investment should make active travel a more attainable modal option therefor leading to a reduction in demand for car parking in Horsham.

Horsham North Urban Design Framework (2013)

The Urban Design Framework for Horsham North (UDF) is a guiding document to provide an integrated, strategic plan for urban design and development over the short, medium and longer terms in the urban area north of Horsham's rail line. The project identifies design interventions to improve streets and public spaces,

buildings and landscapes to support and facilitate social, economic and environmental outcomes for Horsham North.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- The UDF proposed design-led solutions to improve the urban landscape of Horsham North, including physical improvements to the public realm (streetscape, public places and open space, can enhance the image and perception of an area, changing the scale and vastness, and improving the passive surveillance. These factors can change the profile of streets and are important in encouraging pedestrian movement and/or cycling, therefore reducing the need for car parking to some extent.

Horsham CBD Revitalisation Strategy (2017)

This project was undertaken in 2017 to inform Council about possible CBD interventions including public realm improvements and possible infrastructure upgrades.

This strategy document focuses on guidance for infrastructure and Council-asset improvements that will form the core of the CBD revitalisation programme. Alongside infrastructure improvements ('hardware'), a wider set of complementary 'software' interventions including events, promotional activities and community and business engagement were explored for further activating the Horsham CBD and reinforcing the impacts of improvements to physical assets.

Furthermore, the Strategy provides a set of principles to support Council decision making with regard to infrastructure, transport and public realm projects, with specific reference to:

- A Town Square
- Pavement modifications in areas with median parking areas to calm traffic and enhance pedestrian access
- Tree plantings and landscaping in median car parking areas, incorporating water harvesting and reuse
- Provision of shade and shelter to enhance shop fronts, and connecting parking areas to retail areas for pedestrian access, including intersection improvements to encourage safer pedestrian crossings.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- The CBD Revitalisation Strategy focusses on strategies and recommendations aimed at retaining a compact CBD, promoting walking and providing for cycling, all of which require sensible and appropriate management of car parking. The Strategy recognises that Horsham is developing a new car parking strategy that is intended to set a sustainable and best practice path for the future management of car parking.

Horsham Rail Corridor Draft Masterplan (2015)

This Masterplan has been developed following the move to relocate freight operations from the centre of Horsham to the new Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal. This move presents an exciting opportunity to reinvigorate the rail corridor between Wawunna Road and McPherson Street. The masterplan is a blueprint for new infrastructure, investment and land uses along the rail corridor and will explore opportunities to connect Horsham North with the city centre.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- A proposed future use of the rail corridor site includes new recreation facilities with passive open space and the construction of a new car park.

Horsham Framework for Managing Growth (2013)

The Framework Plan is a planning tool to help inform planning decisions and guide the long-term vision to support future urban growth and development of Horsham. The plan lays out the vision, themes, strategies, implementation and further strategic work for Horsham in order to guide future growth and development for the town. It is intended that the Framework Plan will be implemented through changes to Council's Municipal Strategic Statement in the Horsham Planning Scheme.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- The Plan proposes the development of supporting strategies to manage land use and development throughout Horsham including the provision of infrastructure to support sustainable transport modes within the established urban area. A successful sustainable transport agenda for Horsham will influence the travel behaviour of local residents and lead to less demand for car parking.

Horsham Central Activities District Strategy (2013)

The Horsham Central Activities District Strategy provides a policy framework to ensure orderly and appropriate development and growth takes place across the Central Activities District (CAD) into the future. The Strategy provides an important social and economic context for Horsham to ensure informed decision making can be made in the future in relation to CAD land uses.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- Ensures informed decision making in relation to retail, economic and social land uses across the CAD to guide future development. It provides a set of data in the wider CBD context relating to retail floor space and forecasted growth, which will affect the provision of car parking via the Horsham Planning Scheme.
- Supports a shift to high densities in the CBD and a compact built form supporting walking and cycling and placing less demand on existing car parking inventory
- Limits expansion of business areas where it would otherwise lead to a negative effect on the performance of existing areas and result in fringe developments and further catering for private vehicles on Horsham's transport system
- Confirms that the Horsham CAD has more than adequate vehicle access and parking provision
- Minimises and/or eliminate vehicle crossings on to private sites for car parking and service delivery so that the footpaths remain free of conflict with vehicles

Horsham CBD Parking and Management Strategy

The Horsham CBD Parking and Management Strategy is the most recent parking study for Horsham, conducted in 2010. The strategy primarily focusses on issues relating to the supply of car parking within the Horsham CBD with regard to the management of car parking on public streets, public car parks and the forecasted additional car parking required to serve the City's future growth. The strategy returns to the previous study undertaken in Horsham in 2001 and measures changes in parking demand throughout the CBD, changes in central land uses and likely changes to the Horsham Planning Scheme.

This plan identifies opportunities for additional parking including a multi-level car park which includes an estimate of parking rates to make the investment viable.

How this strategy relates to car parking policy:

- This strategy provided an occupancy survey which has been referenced in this report to inform parking management responses.

APPENDIX B Stakeholder Engagement

The MRCagney team facilitated an intensive series of stakeholder engagement workshops over a three-day period in June 2016. The workshops allowed members of the community, Councillors, Council staff, local traders and other stakeholder groups to discuss contemporary approaches to car parking management and gather a more in depth understanding of the influence car parking poses on urban environments and regional centres.

The workshops were aimed to develop capacity within the community about the complexities of car parking as well as develop an understanding of the local users perceptions of how parking is working in Horsham. Attendees were introduced to some key issues associated with standard approaches to car parking management including supply and demand, free vs paid parking, minimum statutory parking rates, cash-in-lieu of parking and driver behaviour. Additionally we expanded the scope of a conventional car parking workshop to include some other key issues and themes that are very influential in determining the success or failure of a town and its overall appeal and profile as a place to live, invest or visit.

Our aim was to open up a dialogue with the community about possible improvements to the CBD through reaching an appropriate level of car parking supply. This capacity building exercise encouraged attendees to envision a future Horsham that was appealing as a place to visit – one where it was easy to enjoy the town's cultural landscape, stay longer and importantly participate more in the local economy. Attendees were able to distinguish between a place that is enjoyable for people, making them want to stay and spend; and simply a place that is accessible conveniently by car, inducing short stays and small spends.

The team unpacked some important concepts that contribute to making urban areas function in the best way possible to balance the needs of both drivers and pedestrians. Returning road space to people-based activities is an effective way to ensure CBD land uses are used to maximise prosperity. This outcome is dependent on ensuring car parking supply is not at an unsustainable level and that 'streets' are prioritised over 'roads'. Simply put: streets are for people and return the greatest value, whereas roads are simply for vehicle movement and represent a cost, rather than a return. We need to evolve from a traditional approach to car parking and road hierarchies into street classifications that are systematically augmented to pedestrian needs above all other functions. This is achievable even on a small scale and examples exist in central Horsham of simple and elegant treatments to improve the pedestrian realm.

The workshops discussed foot traffic as one of the key factors driving an economically and socially successful main street, how having healthy numbers of people walking around creates a vital village atmosphere where people can spontaneously meet, and how this collectively can support a variety of businesses. Horsham is rich in amenity, bringing together a variety of interesting retail and dining attractions, service providers and other businesses enjoy a strong sense of community and a quality CBD environment. One of Horsham's greatest endowments is its excellent accessibility through a variety of travel modes, particularly walking and cycling, therefore the right elements are present for the town to genuinely address its future mobility concerns and movement patterns. Reduced reliance on cars and greater walkability within all urban areas leads to more foot traffic and better access to customers, something that can make a town 'come to life' especially in a unique environment like the Horsham CBD with an interesting built form and a legible grid network of central streets.

Who did we speak with?

Council developed an intensive consultation schedule for the dates Thursday 16th to Saturday the 18th of June with workshops and meetings taking place at Council.

Typically some of the workshops were only attended by a few people. Parking often doesn't leap off the page as an exciting topic for discussion. This is not a Horsham thing – its just a thing. Possibly we could have reduced the amount of community workshops to just two or three to allow bigger turnouts and a more dynamic workshop environment. This only speculation though, and the advantage of making so many time slots available was that we did maximise the opportunity for people to access the information and get to inform the process.

The following list details the stakeholders we engaged with during the three days:

- Inception meeting with Manager, Director and CEO
- Meeting with Councillors
- Parking staff consultation
- Business consultation Session (including Business Horsham)
- EMG consultation
- Horsham Parking Consultative and Advisory Committee
- Mobility and Special Needs
- Community sessions

What did they say?

A common response during the community engagement workshops was that Horsham residents enjoy the rural lifestyle and the convenience to everyday tasks that living in the country offers. That is, they enjoy being able to drive freely throughout the town unencumbered by traffic congestion with easy access to the goods and services they require for their daily lives. This behaviour, although completely acceptable to a large extent and understandable given the need to travel throughout the region, can actually have negative impacts on a town and stall its social and economic potential as a thriving, vibrant and interesting rural hub. Reducing the dependence of private vehicle use throughout central Horsham should become a priority for the town but first of all, people need to understand their own travel behaviour and develop capacity for positive change.

The team opened up a dialogue with workshop participants about their own travel needs throughout the town. This allowed a level of reflection on individual travel behaviour and subsequent questions followed about the best way to target entrenched travel behaviour and uncover some possible solutions that would be of benefit to both resident and the town itself.

The Horsham community is proud and dedicated to the preservation of liveability enjoyed through its unique rural and urban lifestyle. Residents and other stakeholders collectively shared a common vision for the town: they want to retain the lifestyle that they enjoy but see Horsham prosper for their future and their children's future. This vision was a running theme throughout the workshops and will support shaping the future of Horsham and the direction the town chooses to follow.

Liveability; movement and mobility; the economy, local business and industry; events, attractions and tourism were naturally identified as important areas of focus for the town moving forward. Importantly, the relationship and role of car parking management in allowing for these future opportunities to truly unfold is something that was tested with attendees understanding future trade-offs, challenges and options.

The overall success of the workshops was founded on a sense of optimism that was generated about the future of Horsham and how a parking strategy can contribute to a positive outcome for the town. The community is invested in their town and want Council to make the best decisions possible on behalf of community, industry and business needs. The review of the town's car parking management is just one project that is required to ensure the town is on track for a prosperous future.

Additionally, workshops proved to be an important opportunity to get the community talking about car parking and reflecting on their behaviour, something that is critical to achieving positive change. If the town wants to

attract future investment and modernise, development will be required and therefore strong community support is critical. Travel behaviour and car parking management are just two issues that the town is required to address moving forward and this strategy will set ambitious yet achievable benchmarks to achieve this.

Workshop activities

Each workshop involved a presentation about modern approaches to car parking management with ensuing Q & A sessions and some capacity building activities. The aim was to get stakeholders to think about what they value most about their town; how it could be improved; and what assets, attractions and qualities the town could not afford to lose in any case.

The following lists detail the responses to the two questions we asked during the community engagement workshops. The scope of the questions were intentionally broad to expand on car parking and allow attendees to draw links between parking and driving with more prosperous activities and land uses.

Things we can't lose

• Concern for elderly citizens
• The quality of main streets
• Human flow; could make it better
• The history of Horsham
• The heritage of buildings and facades
• The streetscape
• The country town "feel" and atmosphere
• The social connection and community feel
• Do not lose the quality/appearance of the main street
• Street cleaning
• Long parking bays for tourists
• Roberts Place trees
• Can't lose businesses on the main street/CBD
• Outdoor seating/appropriate seating
• Gathering spaces for diverse demographics
• Local developing food community
• The river
• Our green spaces
• Our compact CBD
• May Park
• Free traffic flow
• Shade from trees/shelter
• Speciality stores/shopping
• Heritage
• Kannamaroo Festival (must grow)
• Old police station
• 40 Winks carpark
• Town Hall development

Big opportunities for Horsham

• Equal access parking

• Long parking bay (Aldi)
• Integrate Plaza better with Firebrace St CBD
• Shade and spaces for parking
• Water fountains/features
• Introduce environmental features (Grampians) and cultural features to the CBD streets
• Youth art
• Utilise the river area more strategically
• Improve wayfinding
• Outside trading/events
• Encourage active travel/end of trip facilities
• Roundabout Wilson – Darlot Street (congestion)
• Hamilton St intersection (congestion)
• Susceptible to crashes on the bridge (what happens if it's closed?)
• Timeline for bypass
• Heavy vehicle breakdown
• App/map showing where all parking zones are including long vehicles
• Expand local food community
• More pedestrian friendly- cars too dominant
• Clean up planning scheme to incentivise development
• Better overall use of street width for both parking and shade
• Add to the town's great streets
• Better pedestrian connections/infrastructure
• Better walkways, pedestrian linkages (covered)
• Pedestrian thoroughfare opportunities at Wilson and Hamilton St (Harvey Norman)
• Park/meeting place in the centre to connect local paths
• Covered public spaces
• Music performance opportunities
• Educating rather than fine – EZ Park education
• Show visitors get a fine (EZ Park)
• Zone parking/consistent
• Greater tolerance re parking meters
• Make walking/pedestrian environment more appealing
• Cultural change/shift
• Infrastructure on the river
• Exploit the river as a real gateway to the town
• Cultural precinct at Pynsent St
• Water feature in the town/precinct
• Narrow streets
• Lighting features in the CBD to improve safety/vitality
• More public toilets (only 2 in town)
• More bike parking facilities
• Nice public and outdoor seating
• Shop-top housing in CBD using second storey buildings