

# City of Georgetown, South Carolina

Georgetown, S. Carolina

Parking Study  
Final Report

July 27, 2016

ATL15158.00



**TimHaahs**

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July 27, 2016

Mr. Tee Miller  
Economic Development Director  
City of Georgetown  
120 North Fraser Street  
Georgetown, SC 29440

**RE: *Parking Study for Downtown Core Commercial District – Final Report  
Project 01-2015-001  
Georgetown, South Carolina***

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you for allowing us to work with the City in preparing this final report. We hope you find the information within this report helpful as you and your staff makes recommendations regarding the expansion of public parking to support future development and redevelopment. Thank you for allowing TimHaahs to work with the City on this important project.

Very truly yours,



Vicky Gagliano, MBA, LEED AP, CPP  
Director of Parking Studies



Michael D. Martindill  
Principal

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## Introduction

Timothy Haahs and Associates, Inc. (TimHaahs) was engaged by the City of Georgetown (the City) to identify if there is adequate on-street parking supply to service the retail and restaurants. In addition, the City is interested in understanding the future impact of rebuilding the properties lost during the fire in 2013. Finally, the City would like to promote additional development and there is a potential new project which would include a hotel, banquet, and conference space to the eastern edge of the downtown core. However, the City must evaluate if the existing parking system is capable of supporting that development.

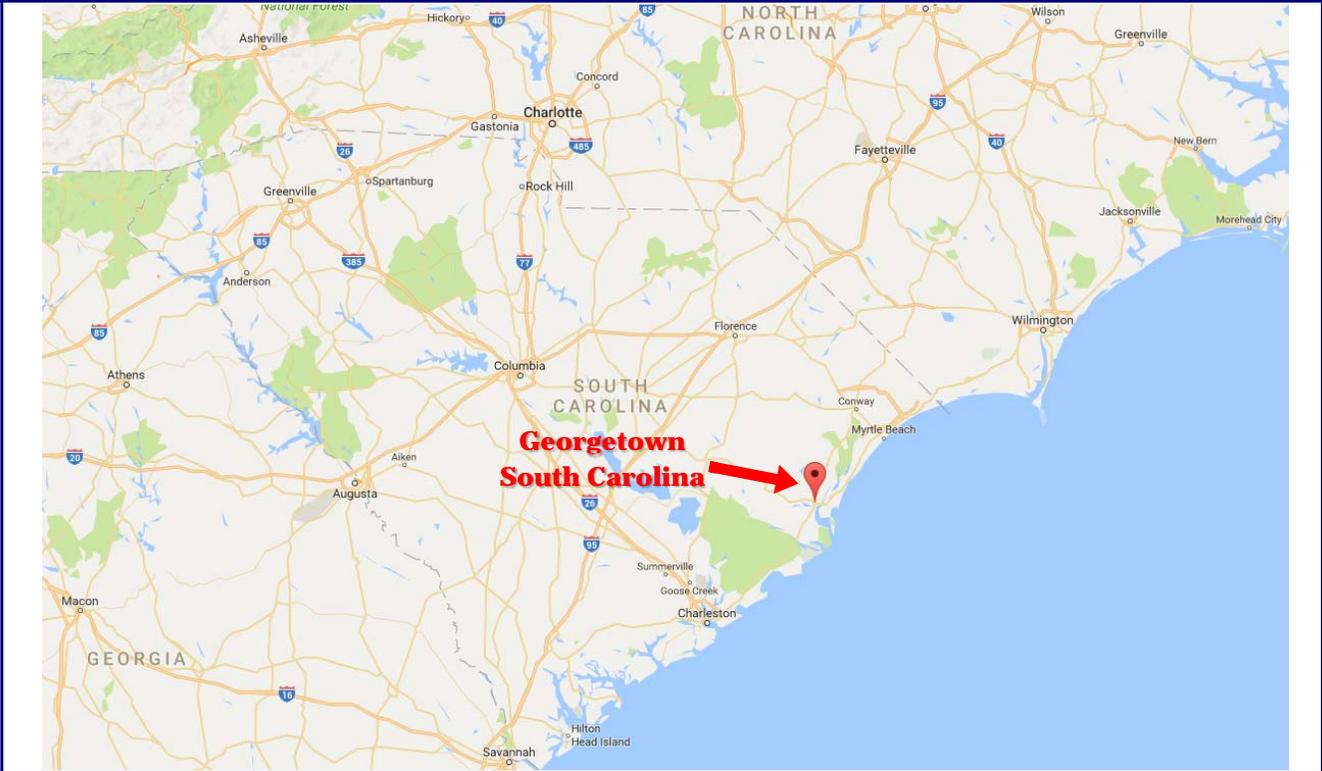
We understand that the City would like to identify strategies to enhance the downtown experience by encouraging parking turnover, implementing effective parking enforcement, providing adequate parking supply and, in general, use their parking resources as a catalyst for future development.



## Study Area

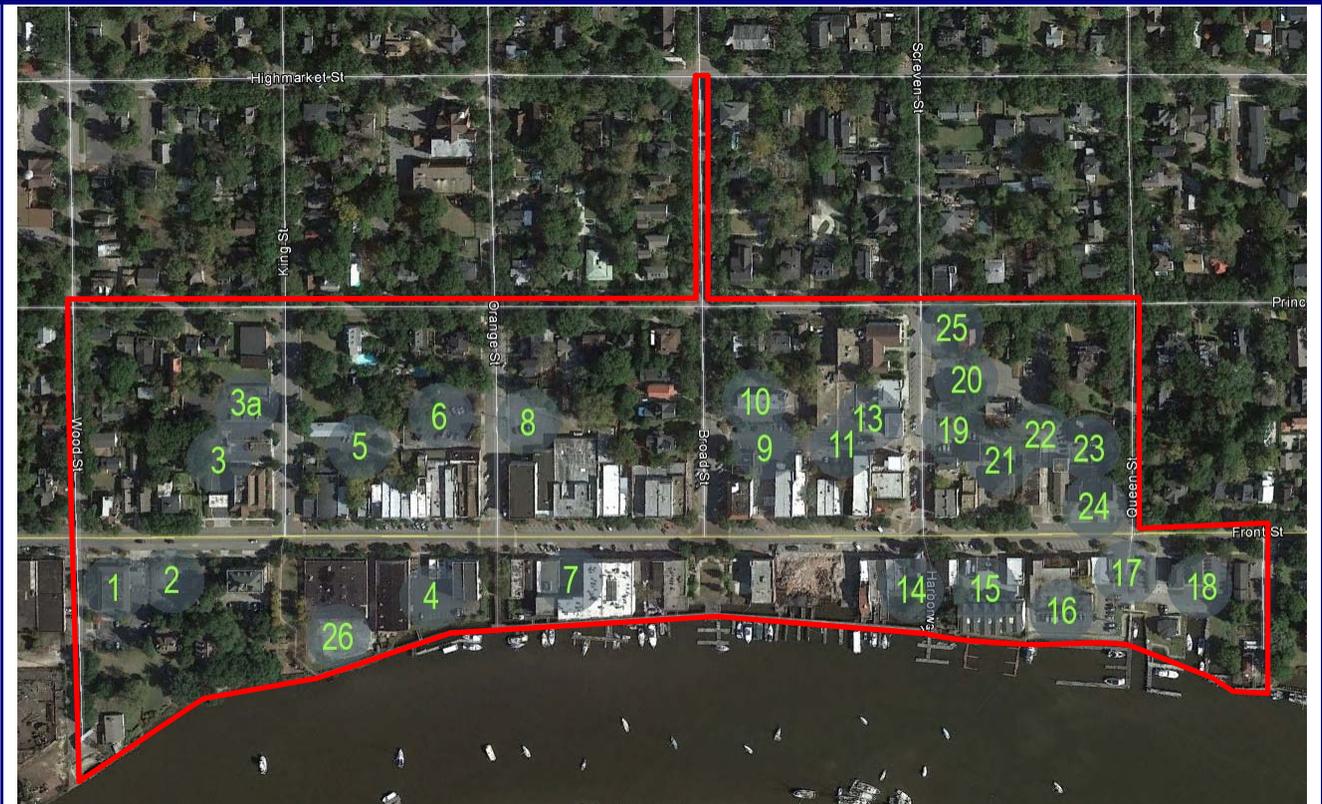
Georgetown is located along on the eastern coast of South Carolina with direct waterway access to the Atlantic Ocean via the Sampit River. The study area is bordered by Queen Street to the east, Highmarket Street to the north, Wood Street to the west, and the Sampit River to the south. An overview map as well as a detailed downtown map is provided on the following page.

**Figure 1: Overview Map**



Source: Google Maps and Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

**Figure 2: Downtown Study Area Map**



Source: Google Maps and Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

## Current Parking Conditions

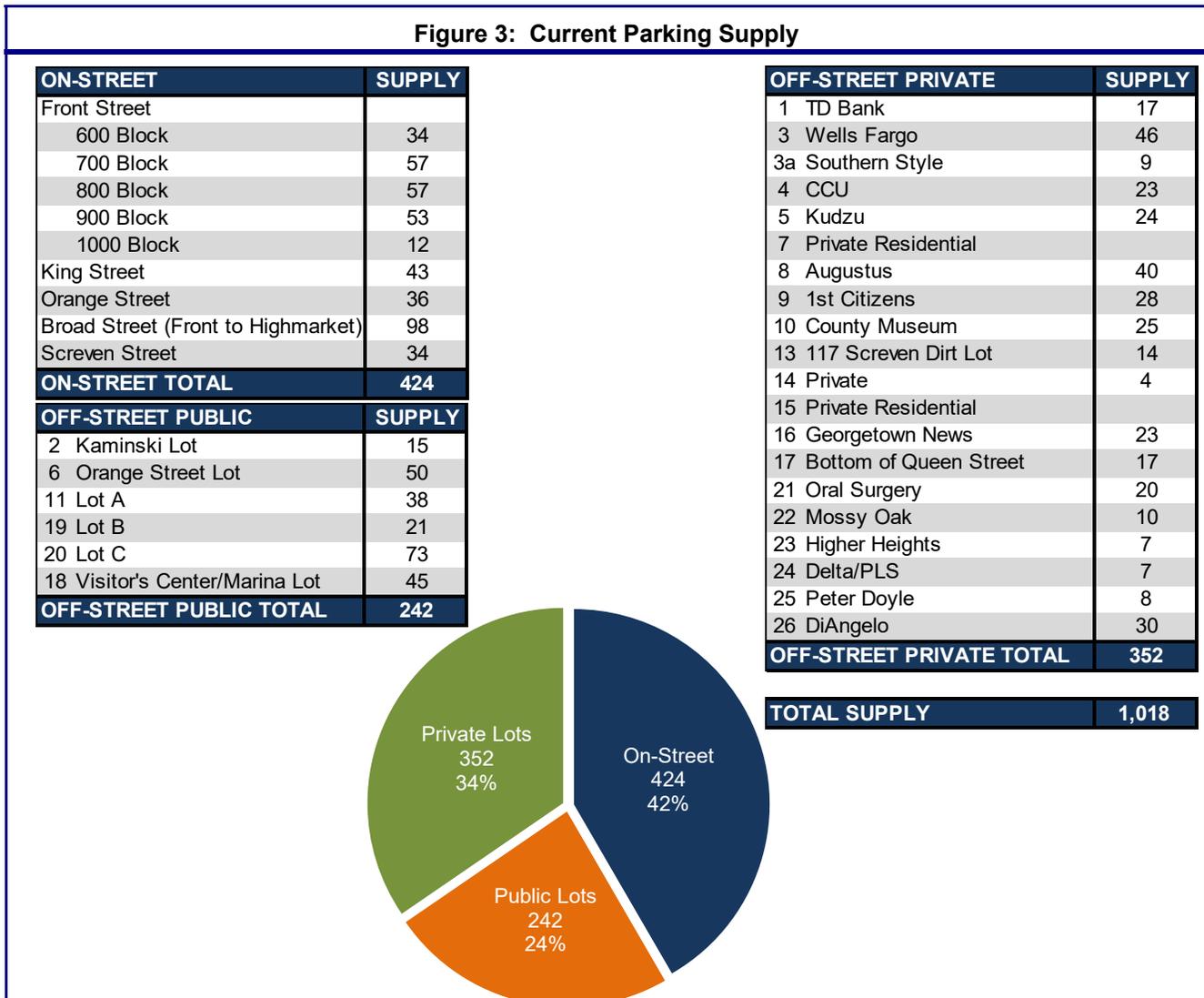
The TimHaahs team physically conducted site observations on Monday, April 11, 2016 and occupancy counts on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, from 9 AM until 5 PM. According to City representatives, Tuesday is representative of a typical weekday.

### Parking Supply

During our site visit on April 11 and 12, 2016, we identified six public off-street parking lots and 20 private off-street parking lots as indicated in the previous map (1 through 26), with a total of 594 spaces. There are 242 spaces located in the public lots (2, 6, 11, 18, 19, and 20) and 352 spaces in the private lots. We did not include the supply or demand associated with the two private parking areas that were gated and reserved for residential use only.

We also performed observations on all 424 on-street parking spaces located within the study area boundary. The following figure details the breakdown and distribution of the 1,018 parking spaces which were included in this analysis.

**Figure 3: Current Parking Supply**

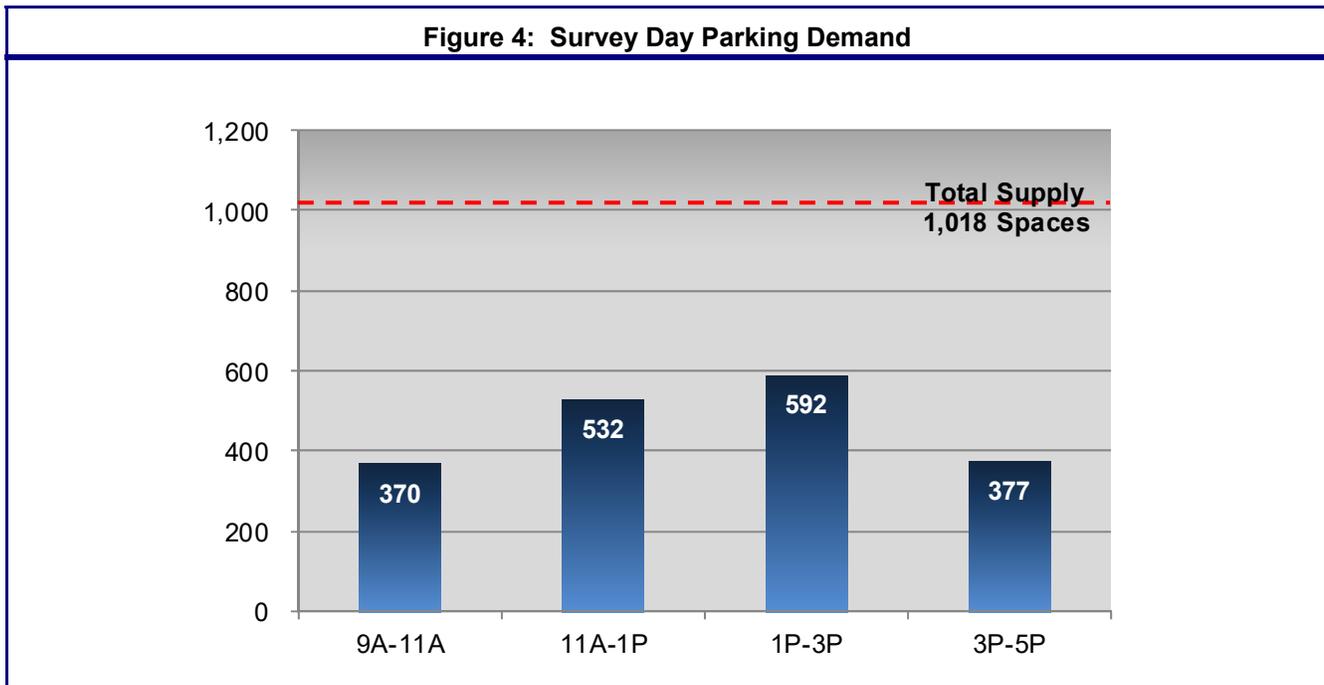


Source: Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

## Parking Demand and Occupancy

In order to quantify the current parking conditions in Georgetown, our team collected data on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, by physically counting the number of parked cars along each block face as well as within each off-street parking facility. Our team collected data over an eight-hour time period, from 9 AM until 5 PM, in order to determine the peak hour and in order to evaluate whether there were specific areas with higher or lower demand. We also performed site observations on the evening of Monday, April 11, 2016 in order to understand the parking conditions after most downtown businesses are closed.

The survey day peak demand occurred between 1 PM and 3PM with 592 vehicles parked within the study area. This represents a peak-hour parking occupancy of 58 percent. A graph of the hourly data is shown below.



Source: Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016



The table on the following page outlines the parking demand and occupancy by area. The overall parking occupancy only exceeded 50% between 11AM and 3PM. However, there were several areas where the parking occupancy was much higher and in some areas, completely filled to capacity. There were 57 instances where the parking occupancy exceeded 50%, 21 instances where the parking occupancy exceeded 85%, and 5 instances where the observed parking occupancy was 100%. Beyond the lunch rush, the current parking occupancy in downtown is considered adequate. We understand some users feel that there is inadequate parking as the on-street parking spaces in front of their destination are occupied. However, throughout the two days of our visit, we

were always able to find a parking space within a one block radius of most destinations.

**Table 1: Survey Day Parking Demand and Occupancy**

ON-STREET	SUPPLY	PARKING DEMAND				PARKING OCCUPANCY			
		9A-11A	11A-1P	1P-3P	3P-5P	9A-11A	11A-1P	1P-3P	3P-5P
Front Street									
600 Block	34	14	24	20	16	41%	71%	59%	47%
700 Block	57	14	33	52	14	25%	58%	91%	25%
800 Block	57	10	53	56	39	18%	93%	98%	68%
900 Block	53	11	45	51	31	21%	85%	96%	58%
1000 Block	12	7	7	12	10	58%	58%	100%	83%
King Street	43	12	30	30	20	28%	70%	70%	47%
Orange Street	36	11	18	16	17	31%	50%	44%	47%
Broad Street (Front to Highmarket)	98	29	38	40	28	30%	39%	41%	29%
Screven Street	34	29	31	31	15	85%	91%	91%	44%
<b>ON-STREET TOTAL</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC</b>	<b>SUPPLY</b>	<b>9A-11A</b>	<b>11A-1P</b>	<b>1P-3P</b>	<b>3P-5P</b>	<b>9A-11A</b>	<b>11A-1P</b>	<b>1P-3P</b>	<b>3P-5P</b>
2 Kaminski Lot	15	2	3	4	3	13%	20%	27%	20%
6 Orange Street Lot	50	14	20	24	19	28%	40%	48%	38%
11 Lot A	38	17	25	23	21	45%	66%	61%	55%
19 Lot B	21	18	21	20	15	86%	100%	95%	71%
20 Lot C	73	35	26	37	31	48%	36%	51%	42%
18 Visitor's Center/Marina Lot	45	21	12	12	10	47%	27%	27%	22%
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE</b>	<b>SUPPLY</b>	<b>9A-11A</b>	<b>11A-1P</b>	<b>1P-3P</b>	<b>3P-5P</b>	<b>9A-11A</b>	<b>11A-1P</b>	<b>1P-3P</b>	<b>3P-5P</b>
1 TD Bank	17	3	4	6	5	18%	24%	35%	29%
3 Wells Fargo	46	17	15	22	8	37%	33%	48%	17%
3a Southern Style	9	2	8	8	1	22%	89%	89%	11%
4 CCU	23	5	5	2	1	22%	22%	9%	4%
5 Kudzu	24	9	7	9	4	38%	29%	38%	17%
7 Private Residential	N/A		Not Included				Not Included		
8 Augustus	40	2	8	12	9	5%	20%	30%	23%
9 1st Citizens	28	9	12	16	12	32%	43%	57%	43%
10 County Museum	25	21	24	19	6	84%	96%	76%	24%
13 117 Screven Dirt Lot	14	9	8	8	5	64%	57%	57%	36%
14 Private	4	2	2	2	2	50%	50%	50%	50%
15 Private Residential	N/A		Not Included				Not Included		
16 Georgetown News	23	9	13	15	10	39%	57%	65%	43%
17 Bottom of Queen Street	17	11	12	13	6	65%	71%	76%	35%
21 Oral Surgery	20	0	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
22 Mossy Oak	10	10	10	10	3	100%	100%	100%	30%
23 Higher Heights	7	7	2	4	4	100%	29%	57%	57%
24 Delta/PLS	7	0	5	5	3	0%	71%	71%	43%
25 Peter Doyle	8	7	7	6	5	88%	88%	75%	63%
26 DiAngelo	30	3	4	7	4	10%	13%	23%	13%
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE TOTAL</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>TOTAL ON- &amp; OFF-STREET</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>37%</b>

Source: Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

## Effective Supply Factor

Effective supply is a common term used in the parking industry. The effective supply is essentially a “cushion” used to account for parking spaces lost due to mis-parked vehicles, snow removal, construction, and the natural flow of vehicles. Simply stated, it considers that a parking supply operates at peak efficiency when parking occupancy is no more than 80 percent to 95 percent of the supply. When occupancy exceeds this level, patrons may experience delays and frustration while searching for the last few remaining spaces. This creates a perception that the supply is inadequate even when there are some spaces still available.

We have applied an effective supply factor (ESF) of 85% for all on-street parking areas, 90% for all off-street paved parking areas, and 80% for all dirt and gravel off-street parking areas. The table below outlines the effective supply by area.

**Table 2: Effective Parking Supply**

ON-STREET	SUPPLY	EFFECTIVE SUPPLY	
		FACTOR	EFF. SUPPLY
Front Street			
600 Block	34	85%	29
700 Block	57	85%	48
800 Block	57	85%	48
900 Block	53	85%	45
1000 Block	12	85%	10
King Street	43	85%	37
Orange Street	36	85%	31
Broad Street (Front to Highmarket)	98	85%	83
Screven Street	34	85%	29
<b>ON-STREET TOTAL</b>	<b>424</b>		<b>360</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC</b>			
OFF-STREET PUBLIC	SUPPLY	ESF	EFF. SUPPLY
2 Kaminski Lot	15	90%	14
6 Orange Street Lot	50	90%	45
11 Lot A	38	90%	34
19 Lot B	21	90%	19
20 Lot C	73	90%	66
18 Visitor's Center/Marina Lot	45	90%	41
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>		<b>218</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE</b>			
OFF-STREET PRIVATE	SUPPLY	ESF	EFF. SUPPLY
1 TD Bank	17	90%	15
3 Wells Fargo	46	90%	41
3a Southern Style	9	90%	8
4 CCU	23	90%	21
5 Kudzu	24	80%	19
7 Private Residential	N/A	N/A	N/A
8 Augustus	40	80%	32
9 1st Citizens	28	90%	25
10 County Museum	25	90%	23
13 117 Screven Dirt Lot	14	80%	11
14 Private	4	80%	3
15 Private Residential	N/A	N/A	N/A
16 Georgetown News	23	90%	21
17 Bottom of Queen Street	17	90%	15
21 Oral Surgery	20	80%	16
22 Mossy Oak	10	80%	8
23 Higher Heights	7	80%	6
24 Delta/PLS	7	90%	6
25 Peter Doyle	8	90%	7
26 DiAngelo	30	80%	24
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE TOTAL</b>	<b>352</b>		<b>302</b>
<b>TOTAL ON- &amp; OFF-STREET</b>	<b>1,018</b>		<b>880</b>
<b>CUSHION:</b>			<b>138</b>

Source: Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

After adjusting the supply of 1,018 parking spaces by the effective supply factor, the resulting 'cushion' is 138 parking spaces or an effective supply of 880 spaces. Given the size of the area, various user groups, linear nature of the downtown, and the mixture of on-street, surface lots, and parking garages, the stated cushion is appropriate.

### ***Model Calibration for Seasonality***

When calibrating data to account for seasonality, we typically review historical trends in order to determine which month of the year represents the third busiest month. The third busiest month is selected as a design day because it balances the need to provide adequate parking without overbuilding too much parking that will sit empty for most of the year. Monthly tax revenue data was provided by City representatives. Upon our review, April has historically been the third busiest month of the year and as such, we have not adjusted the data. We understand conditions increase during the summer months when many visitors are going to the beach and passing through Georgetown. In addition, the downtown becomes very congested during events and it is sometimes difficult to find a nearby place to park.

### ***Parking Adequacy (Surplus/Shortage)***

The study area contains 1,018 parking spaces. However, in order to determine the parking surplus or shortage, we revert to the effective supply of 880 spaces referenced previously. The peak observed demand in these spaces was determined to be 592 vehicles which occurred between 1 PM and 3 PM. The current downtown parking adequacy results in a surplus of 247 parking spaces

If we exclude the private lots, the overall downtown surplus is still 150 spaces (52-space on-street surplus and a 98-space off-street surplus). The table on the following page outlines the parking surplus by on-street area as well as for each off-street parking facility.



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**Table 3: Current Parking Adequacy**

<b>ON-STREET</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE SUPPLY</b>	<b>PEAK HOUR DEMAND</b>	<b>PARKING ADEQUACY</b>
Front Street			
600 Block	29	20	9
700 Block	48	52	(4)
800 Block	48	56	(8)
900 Block	45	51	(6)
1000 Block	10	12	(2)
King Street	37	30	7
Orange Street	31	16	15
Broad Street (Front to Highmarket)	83	40	43
Screven Street	29	31	(2)
<b>ON-STREET TOTAL</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE SUPPLY</b>	<b>PEAK HOUR DEMAND</b>	<b>PARKING ADEQUACY</b>
2 Kaminski Lot	14	4	10
6 Orange Street Lot	45	24	21
11 Lot A	34	23	11
19 Lot B	19	20	(1)
20 Lot C	66	37	29
18 Visitor's Center/Marina Lot	41	12	29
<b>OFF-STREET PUBLIC TOTAL</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE SUPPLY</b>	<b>PEAK HOUR DEMAND</b>	<b>PARKING ADEQUACY</b>
1 TD Bank	15	6	9
3 Wells Fargo	41	22	19
3a Southern Style	8	8	0
4 CCU	21	2	19
5 Kudzu	19	9	10
7 Private Residential	N/A	0	0
8 Augustus	32	12	20
9 1st Citizens	25	16	9
10 County Museum	23	19	4
13 117 Screven Dirt Lot	11	8	3
14 Private	3	2	1
15 Private Residential	N/A	0	0
16 Georgetown News	21	15	6
17 Bottom of Queen Street	15	13	2
21 Oral Surgery	16	0	16
22 Mossy Oak	8	10	(2)
23 Higher Heights	6	4	2
24 Delta/PLS	6	5	1
25 Peter Doyle	7	6	1
26 DiAngelo	24	7	17
<b>OFF-STREET PRIVATE TOTAL</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>TOTAL ON- &amp; OFF-STREET</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>247</b>

Source: Timothy Haahs & Associates, 2016

## Future Conditions

The City is interested in development and redevelopment in the downtown area. As part of that effort, City representatives are taking a proactive approach to parking in order to ensure development/redevelopment efforts are not delayed due to insufficient public parking.

### ***Redevelopment 2012 Fire Properties***

We understand two to three new restaurants may fill in the vacant properties caused by the fire in 2012. In addition, some retail as well as second/third floor residential may also be included. Assuming those restaurants are approximately 15,000 square feet, the retail is 6,000 square feet, and there are 4 new residential units, we the estimated peak demand will occur on a weekend evening with a demand of approximately 180 parking spaces. Since the actual peak hours would likely occur during the evening and weekends, we believe many of those users can utilize existing downtown public parking areas as many of the city and county employee lots are empty. We also estimate the weekday, daytime parking demand will generate a need for approximately 100 new parking spaces.

### ***Hotel Development***

According to City representatives, a new 120-room hotel with meeting space for 300 is being discussed for the Georgetown Times Building site. Based on ITE and ULI data, we anticipate the peak hour will occur during the weekend evening hours with a demand of approximately 313 spaces where one-third of those spaces are occupied by hotel guests and the remaining two-thirds are banquet/meeting room attendees. We should also note, during the weekday, daytime downtown peak hours, the hotel development may need approximately 150 parking spaces when the hotel is at capacity and the meeting space is occupied.



### ***Summary of Future Conditions***

Should both projects above go forward, we would anticipate an increase in the downtown evening and weekend parking demand by approximately 475 to 500 spaces during the peak hours and with full occupancy/utilization of the event space. For the same two projects, we would anticipate the downtown weekday, daytime parking demand would increase by 200 to 250 parking spaces during the peak downtown hours and with full occupancy/utilization of the event space.

We do not believe that the existing public parking infrastructure is capable of meeting the demands of those two projects in addition to the current downtown businesses that were in operation during our site visit. Furthermore, we did observe a few parcels with vacant buildings. As the downtown vacancy increases, we would anticipate seeing a corresponding increase in the parking demand.

Within an unpaid parking environment, it is often difficult to financially support the construction and operation of a parking garage; therefore other options are typically first implemented as follows:

1. Shift all employees from on-street parking areas to more remote off-street parking facilities and more remote on-street parking areas. One such underutilized on-street area is along Broad Street between Highmarket Street and Prince Street. During our site visit, most of the on-street spaces past Prince Street were vacant throughout the day.

2. To assist with shifting employees from the “front-door” on-street spaces to the more remote locations, we recommend the consideration of paid parking, at least for the on-street areas along Front Street. In addition to assisting the City with managing the distribution of demand, the City will also generate a small amount of revenue that could be reinvested into the downtown parking system.
3. To further support the above two initiative, we recommend utilizing a dedicated employee for the purpose of parking enforcement and to serve as a parking ambassador. That employee would serve as a visual cue that the City is actively managing their parking resources and looking to improve the customer/visitor parking experience.
4. Consider purchasing additional parcels adjacent to Lots B and C as well as demolishing the buildings currently on-site to restripe and expand that surface parking lot. We estimate the 94 existing spaces could be increased to around 250+/- spaces which would assist with providing new spaces for the two projects previously discussed.
5. Evaluate how the City and Hotel developer can expand parking together to allow the hotel to meet their parking demand to further drive and encourage downtown development/redevelopment.

## Other General Observations

The on-street parking is marked as “Two Hour, Free Parking”. The on-street parking is well marked, using very visible signs. The key to getting the kind of turnover desired for on street parking and actually having a “cushion” of parking available for short term users is to enforce the time restricted parking aggressively. We understand that this is not the case today, so there are people that will park in the on-street spaces much longer than two hours and maybe even all day. This is not uncommon when non-paid parking exists in a downtown. One way to improve this is to use what we call “digital tire chalking”, using technology such as license plate recognition to monitor on-street parking. It’s a very efficient and effective way of monitoring parking and issuing warnings and eventually tickets to those that continue to abuse the parking restrictions.

We like the signage and the kiosks that are found around downtown. Wayfinding is well provided, especially for first time visitors to the City. We like the paseos that take one from Front Street to the Harborwalk. The small parks open up the views and make it very easy to access the Harborwalk.