

4.6 Parking

Objective: Provide convenient, plentiful, free parking for customers within the Business District.

4.6.1 Parking Meters

It is beneficial to a business district to have convenient, free access to parking. The parking meters within the Silver Spring Business District may act as deterrents for customers shopping on the street. According to several business owners, the issue does not seem to be the cost of the meters, but rather the nuisance and inconvenience of finding the correct change. The Village should consider the removal of the meters. Time limitations could be monitored by the police department via ‘tire chalking’ or other methods. This would avoid long-term parkers, such as employees or students, from occupying customer parking. Business owner interviews also revealed that the parking meter enforcement policies are perceived to be very strict among the business owners and customers. Both the meters and enforcement policies may deter customers from shopping on Silver Spring Drive and should be reviewed.

Revenues from the meters, while important, may be offset by the improved convenience for businesses without meters. Prior to complete removal of the meters the Village should consider a trial program where (a) the meters are decommissioned and (b) the resulting impacts on businesses are evaluated.

Business owners should encourage employee parking in designated locations to allow store patrons to enjoy street parking options.

4.6.2 Parking Courts

Large-Off-Street Parking Courts –

Several large off street parking areas currently exist within the Business District. These include the

municipal lots behind Winkie’s and the Fox Bay buildings, and several private lots. It is recommended that these parking areas be developed as parking courts, to include decorative paving and a stronger sense of enclosure via enhanced landscape buffers or new buildings to create stronger edge conditions. A coordinated signage system along Silver Spring Drive should be created to direct motorists to available parking courts.

Small- Side-street Parking Courts -

Parking within the Silver Spring business district is not evenly distributed along the street. This has led to some parking concerns especially west of Santa Monica Boulevard during peak parking times.

To alleviate some of these issues, the project team recommends the creation of small side street parking courts on key streets such as Shoreland and Kent. These parking courts are illustrated on the following page. The intent of the parking courts is to discourage parking in front of the homes along these streets. This will be accomplished by providing perpendicular parking on the street. The unusually large building setbacks along these streets allow this configuration.

Design of Parking Courts -

In development of both the large and small parking courts, the following policies should be followed:

When considering new parking or improvement of existing parking within the district, or addressing circulation issues, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Restrict the size of prime parking courts to periods of reasonable demand rather than peak demand. Provide for peak parking in over flow areas, such as underutilized private parking area.

- Encourage and plan for shared parking among adjacent uses.
- Define parking areas as strong public places with a continuous wall of buildings, fences, and attractive structures along either three of the edges or two opposite edges. This creates a courtyard atmosphere. Include openings at key locations for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Shape parking areas as simple geometric forms.
- While landscaped edges (trees, garden walls, or ornamental fences) should be used along the perimeter, interior, fragmented landscape patterns (such as one tree every 5 or 10 parking spaces) should be discouraged. When trees are included in the interior of parking courts they should be grouped together to create significant green spaces.
- Design parking areas as hard-surfaced, public spaces with shared, visually integrated parking and pedestrian areas as the primary focus and landscape elements or sculptural features located along the edges and within lots.
- Use paving patterns to reinforce the shape of the parking court as well as the parking and circulation patterns. Create geometries that give the space greater visual order.
- Use decorative light poles and other visual amenities to reinforce the design of public parking places.
- Provide sites for temporary structures that can be used for daily, weekly, or seasonal events.
- Create strong edges using landscape elements on major circulation routes that

cross open areas on larger parking courts.

- Design street entries into parking areas as visually prominent gateways that have adjacent, but distinct vehicular and pedestrian entrances.
- Bicycle parking may be shared between uses and should be centrally located, easily accessible, and visible from streets or parking lots.

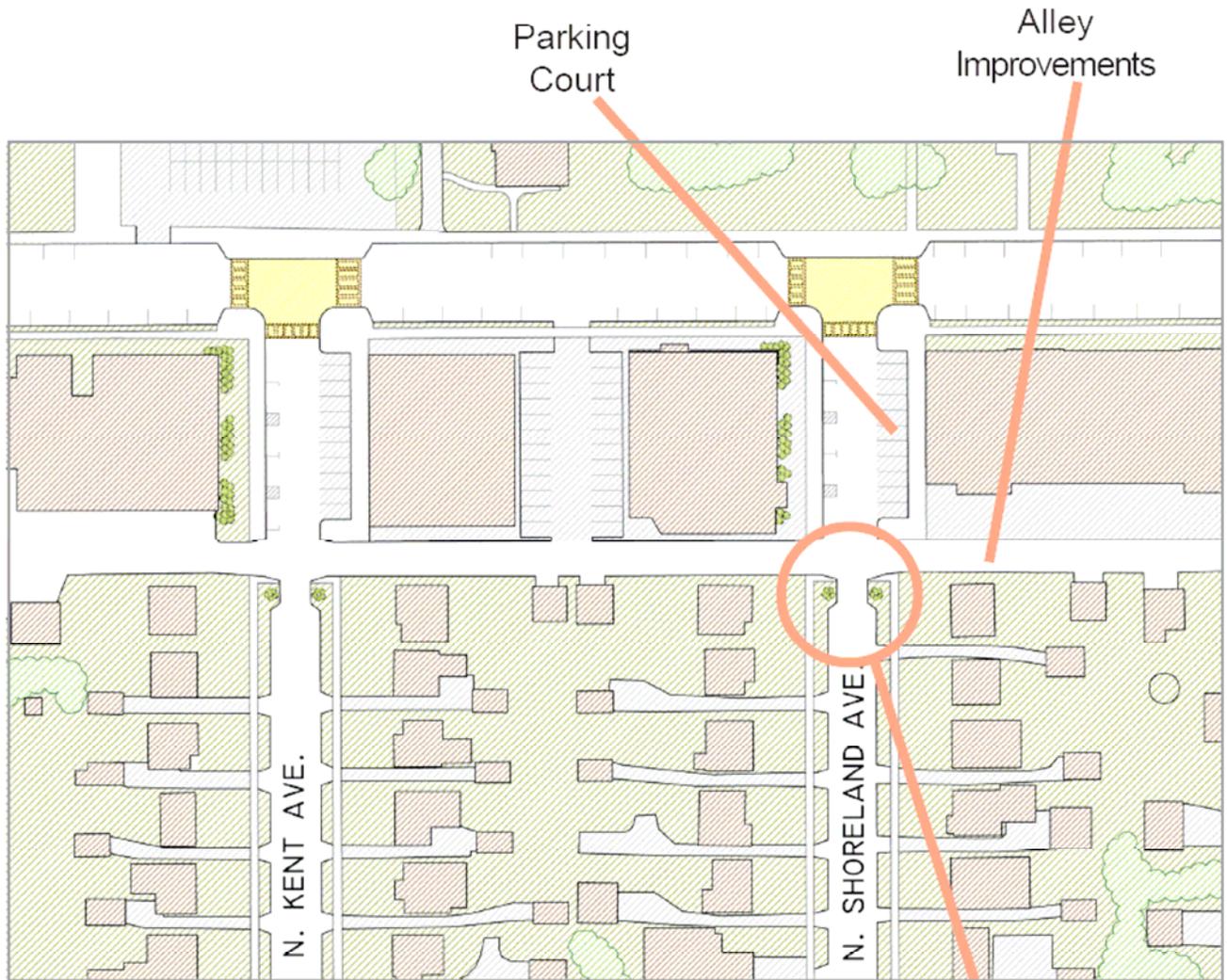
4.6.3 Angled Parking along Silver Spring Drive

In earlier studies, angled parking along one side Silver Spring Drive had been suggested. Angled parking would create additional street parking spaces. Angled parking has also been shown in several communities to effectively calm traffic. As drivers enter the angled parking area, they naturally decrease their speed because they realize there is a possibility of cars backing out into traffic. There is no evidence that angled parking streets experiencing increased traffic accidents.

Angled parking is not recommended until more detailed investigation of the specific dimensions of the driving lane dimensions. As more detailed study is undertaken of curb-bump-outs and traffic-calming devices, some angled parking may be appropriate. Various other alternatives have been proposed to increase and more equitably distribute the parking within the Business District. In addition, other traffic calming devices are also detailed in the ‘Circulation’ section (4.7).



Photomontage illustrates how parking courts might look from Silver Spring Drive (left- before, right-after)



Parking Courts, Alley Improvements and Residential Gateways illustrated on Kent and Shoreland Aves.

Traffic Calming Gateway into Residential Area