

Parking Survey Says! Summary!

The City had over 250 responses to the Cannon Beach TSP Parking Survey, distributed between Residents, Business Owners, Employees and Visitors to Cannon Beach. Over half of the respondents identified as Residents of Cannon Beach, with over a third located in the Presidential/Midtown area, and fifth each from the North End and Haystack Hill areas.

Over half of the Business Owners responding were Cannon Beach residents, while a quarter of the respondents were Seaside or Clatsop County residents. Similarly, half of the Business Owners owned establishments in Downtown Cannon Beach, while over a quarter owned businesses in Midtown and the remainder in the Tolovona Area or operated Home Occupations. On the other hand, over a third of the Employees commute from Seaside and a quarter commute from elsewhere in Clatsop County. Another quarter of Employees are Cannon Beach residents and the remainder come from Tillamook County or further afield. Nearly half identified as Downtown Employees, with a little over a third representing Midtown and the remainder working in the Tolovona area.

Of the 54 Visitors responding to the survey, nearly half were Second Home Guests, with a quarter Just Visiting for the Day or Weekend, and another quarter of respondents Short-Term Rental Stays or Hotel/Motel Guests. A third of these Visitors were from the Portland Metro Area, a quarter from the state of Washington, with the remaining forty percent fairly equally spread across, the state of Oregon, Seattle Metro Area and the US.

The general response can be summarized by the answers to the first question of the Parking Survey, which asked whether parking was working for each of the respondent's particular interests: the majority, approximately 60%, said that Cannon Beach's parking system was insufficient in meeting those needs. Employees (61% Insufficient) were generally the least happy with the parking system, while Visitors, or at least the Visitors who took the survey, were the happiest, or at least felt it was sufficient (56% and 4% excellent) for their particular interest. In fact, only 6 respondents out of 271 who took the survey said that the parking system was working excellently (2%).

This general unhappiness with the functioning of the parking system continued to be registered throughout the remainder of the survey, whether it was On- or Off-Street parking or whether it was Resident, Employee, Business Owner or Visitor. Nearly 75% of respondents said that On-Street parking wasn't working for Customers or Visitors, while a strong majority said the same for Off-Street.

When asked 'who should be the priority user' for On-Street parking, there was a clear preference among Business Owners (57%), Employees (49%) and Visitors (61%) that priority should go to Customers/Visitors, while Residents (40%) felt they, the Residents, should be given priority, followed closely by Customers/Visitors.

When asked 'who should be the priority user' for Off-Street parking, Residents and Visitors responded that it should be fairly distributed between Employees, Customers/Visitors and Residents, while Employees (44%) and Business Owners (51%) responded that Employees should have priority.

When respondents were asked "Assuming an improved parking system, what changes would make the system more friendly, usable, and effective?," the top three responses for Residents included Remote Lots, Shuttle Service and Parking Enforcement, while Employees chose Paid Parking, Employee Permits and Time Restrictions. Business Owners overwhelmingly felt Paid Parking, Employee Permits and Time Restrictions would be effective, while Visitors wanted to see Shuttle Service, Customer/Visitor Only Lots and Remote Lots.

While it may not be evident from the survey results that there is a distinct consensus in improvements or solutions to the general unhappiness with the parking system, if one were to turn to the themes present in the "Additional comments, suggestions, insights" responses indicate a strong preference for the City to consider paid parking and remote lots. The majority of opinions offer suggestions or comparisons to other parking managements systems and when taken as a whole, are optimistic that whether through permitting, employing new technologies or just better enforcement or management, there are indeed solutions out there, that work in similar contexts and can keep Cannon Beach that special place that many love to visit and call home.

Other notes from the results:

- Visitors overwhelmingly prefer to park in Off-Street Lots (46%) when visiting downtown.
- Nearly half (48%) of Business Owners would be interested "in a program that allows businesses to expand operations and pay for off-site parking rather than on-site parking, and nearly as many Owners (43%) were Unsure/Don't Know, indicating they would like to learn more about such an option.
- A majority of Business Owners (60%) felt patrons parked On-Street yet thought they should be parking in Off-Street (47%) lots.
- The majority of Employees (63%) say they park in Off-Street lots, with only a quarter (24%) saying they typically park On-street, which differs significantly from where they would prefer to park, overwhelmingly in Off-Street lots (76%), as opposed to just 8% saying On-Street.
- Residents were equally distributed between On-Street, Off-Street and Don't Drive (walk, ride, bike) when visiting downtown.
- Residents believed downtown and midtown employees to be parking in equal portions On-Street (48%) and Off-Street (47%), while they overwhelmingly thought they should be parking Off-Street (79%).
- By and large, Residents believe visitors to downtown park On-Street (74%), while they think they should be parking Off-Street (60%).