

DOWNTOWN MEDINA PARKING STUDY



Prepared by the City of Medina Community Development Department



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide background data and analysis of public parking in Downtown Medina. The study's contents intend to provide accurate information regarding parking in Downtown Medina and facilitate future decision making. The study includes a full inventory of all public parking spaces, 18 separate parking occupancy counts, an analysis of wayfinding, and provides conclusions and recommendations. The study also contains tables showing parking counts and maps providing a spatial representation of parking occupancy.

PARKING IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWNS

Historic downtown areas, such as Medina, were developed well before the advent of the automobile. Characteristically, downtowns have multi-story buildings situated near the street, a mix of commercial and residential uses, and limited on-site parking. This development pattern is typically pedestrian-friendly, which contributes to the attractiveness of the downtown.

For a downtown area to suitably address parking demand, elements of shared parking must be incorporated. This is typically accomplished through a combination of public parking and parking shared between private properties. In general, the designating of individual parking spaces either on public or private property is inefficient and infeasible for many downtowns. Therefore Medina, and many other successful downtown areas, have exempted the area from off-street parking requirements and committed significant public investment to provide public parking.

The willingness of motorists to walk a moderate distance to their destination(s) is also an essential aspect of parking in a downtown area. In general, $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile (1,320 ft.) is considered an acceptable walking distance to a destination. The entire study area, as described on the following page, is approximately 0.25 miles measured east to west, 0.3 miles measured north to south, and has adequate sidewalks along every street and through Public Square. By this metric, virtually all parking spaces in the study area are walkable to every location in the study area.

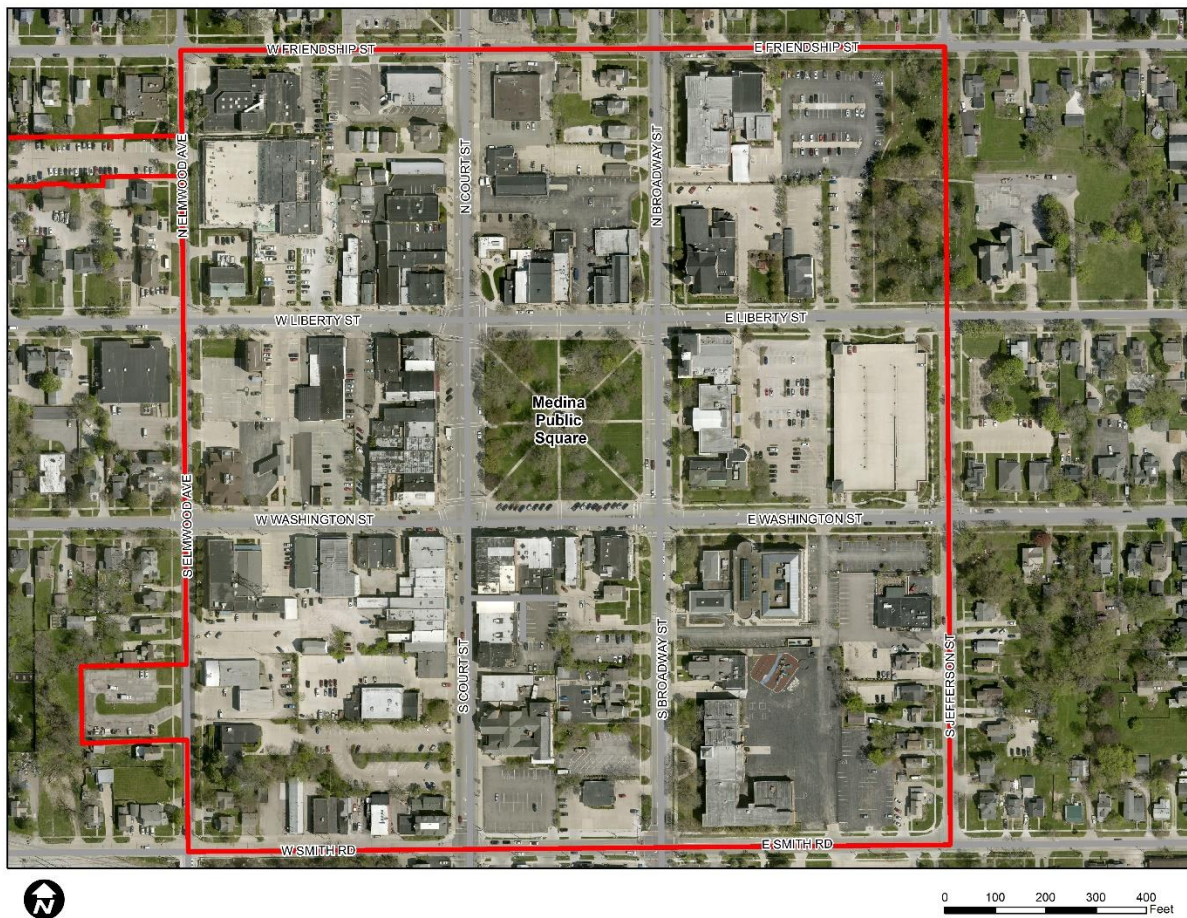
STUDY AREA

As seen in Map 1 below, the study area for the project incorporates the nine-block area around public square and adjacent public parking lots. The study area encompasses the majority of public parking in Downtown Medina including 1,418 parking spaces in an approximately 57-acre area. **The majority of public parking spaces are located within one block of the square** and all spaces are located within two blocks of the square.

The study area is bound by:

- Friendship Street to the north;
- Elmwood Avenue and adjacent parking lots to the west;
- Smith Road to the south; and
- Jefferson Street to the east

Map 1 – Study Area

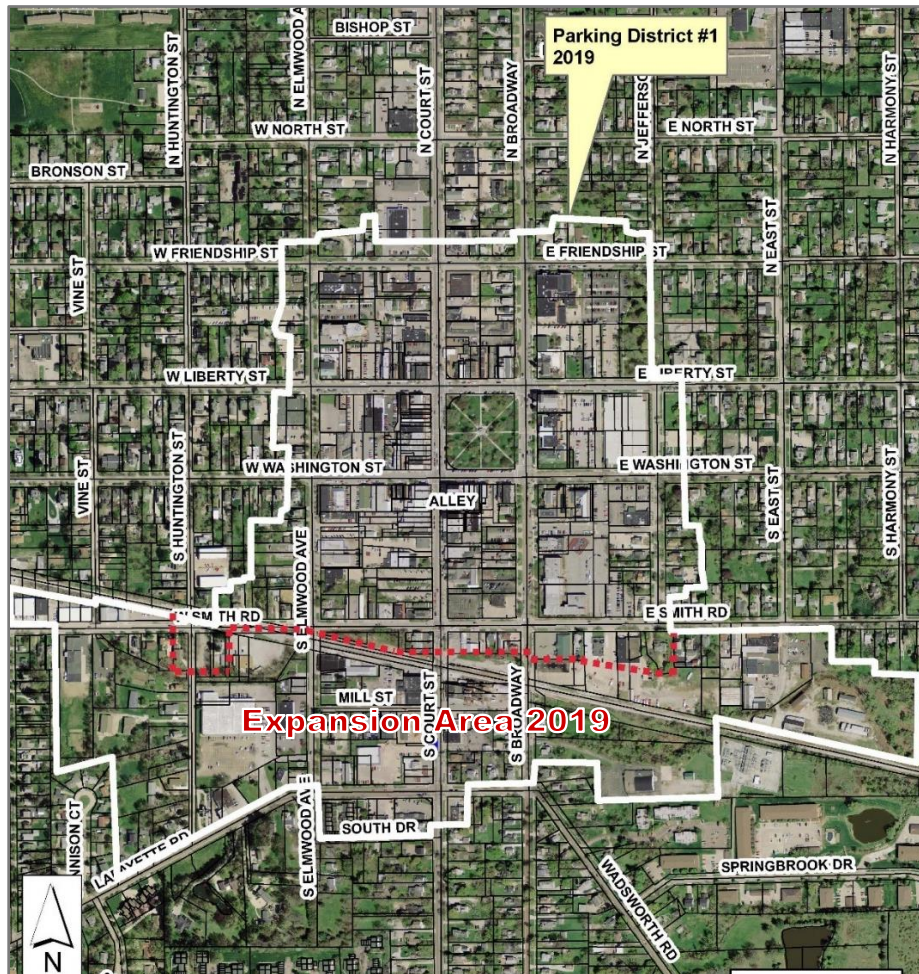


RECENT CHANGES

Parking Exemption District

Since 1978, properties in the downtown area have been exempt from providing the required number of off-street parking spaces. The exempt area, referred to as “Parking District #1”, was amended in 2019 to incorporate a large area to the south, commonly referred to as “South Town”. The purpose of the expansion was to encourage redevelopment in South Town by removing the requirement to provide off-street parking, which is often an obstacle to redevelopment.

Map 2 – Parking Exemption Area Expansion



Residential Parking Permits

City Council recently authorized the issuance of Parking Permits for residents of the Historic District and the Historic Landmarks (Farmers Exchange and McDowell Phillips House). The program was created to provide an option for residents of the noted areas to park in public parking lots and garages in excess of the posted time limits. The Parking Permit does not guarantee parking or provide a designated space. The program is only available to residents to allow their vehicles to park in the noted locations without adhering to the posted time limits.

South Town

The aforementioned South Town area was identified as a “Focus Area” in the recently completed City of Medina Comprehensive Plan. A Focus Area was defined as an area “appropriate for development, redevelopment, or infill, and can dramatically shape the quality of life and economic success of the community in the future”.

South Town’s potential has been driven by its proximity to the Historic Square Area, the successful mixed-use redevelopment of the Farmers Exchange Building, and recently initiated festivals and events. Though South Town is within the parking exemption area and has been identified as a Focus Area, no public parking currently exists in South Town.

Parking Garages

In recent years, the City of Medina has constructed two large public parking garages in the downtown area. The two-story City Hall parking garage is located on the north side of West Liberty Street, east side of North Elmwood Avenue, and south of City Hall. The garage includes 202 public parking spaces. The three-story County Courthouse parking garage is located east of the Courthouse and is bound by East Washington Street, South Jefferson Street, and East Liberty Street. The garage incorporates 351 public parking spaces.

The garages accommodate parking for City Hall and the County Courthouse and provide an off-street public parking option for businesses and residents in the downtown area.

Medina County Courthouse Expansion

During the study, the County Courthouse was undergoing a significant expansion and interior renovations. The expansion was situated on a previously existing parking lot which held 93 on-site parking spaces. Plans for the expansion incorporate 19 on-site parking spaces, which results in a net reduction of 74 parking spaces.

Lot 2 Redevelopment

Public Parking Lot #2 contains 37 parking spaces and is located on the north side of West Liberty Street between Court Street and Elmwood Avenue. A mixed-use development has been approved for the site which will result in the loss of all 37 parking spaces. Public parking will continue to be available in the two public parking lots directly to the south of the site and the City Hall parking garage directly to the north of the site.

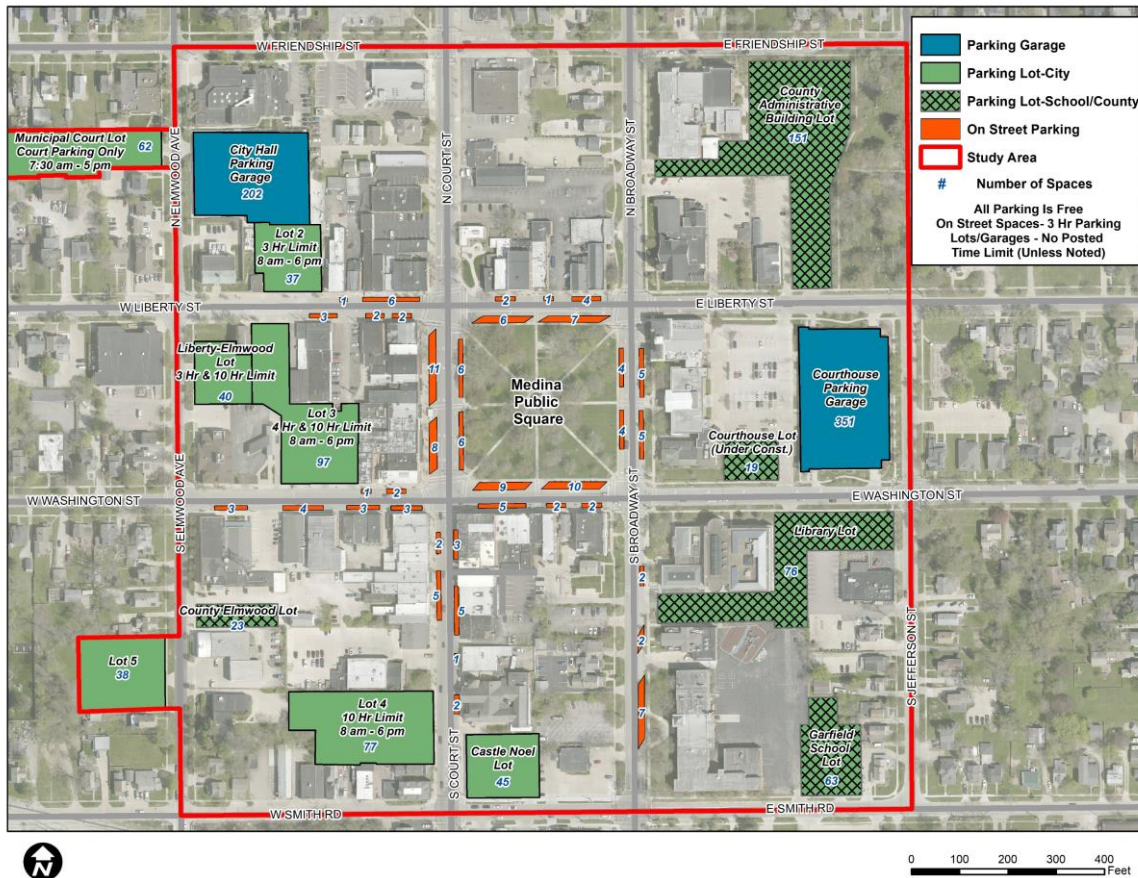
PARKING INVENTORY

Inventory

An inventory of all 1,418 public parking spaces in the study area, as shown in Map 3, was completed on December 2, 2022, which categorized parking spaces into three types:

- Public Parking Lots – 709 spaces (50%)
 - 334 spaces (24%) in public parking lots controlled by the City of Medina
 - The City owns the Municipal Court Lot, The Liberty-Elmwood Lot, Lot 2, Lot 4, and Lot 5
 - The City has agreements to allow public parking on Lot 3 and the Castle Noel Lot
 - 375 spaces (26%) in parking lots controlled by Medina County, the Medina County Library, and Medina City Schools
- Parking Garages – 553 spaces (39%)
 - The City Hall Parking Garage is owned by the City
 - The Courthouse Parking Garage is jointly controlled by the City and County
- On-Street Parking Spaces – 156 spaces (11%)

Map 3 – Parking Types and Capacity



Parking Restrictions

Time regulations for parking varied throughout the parking study area, as follows:

- On-Street parking spaces – 3 hour parking
- Lot #2 – 3 hour parking from 8 am to 6 pm
- Lot #3 – 4 hour and 10 hour parking from 8 am to 6 pm (Signage notes “Must Vacate Lot”)
- Lot #4 – 10 hour parking from 8 am to 6 pm (Signage notes “Must Vacate Lot”)

- Liberty-Elmwood Lot – 3 hour and 10 hour parking
- Municipal Court Lot – Court parking only from 7:30 am to 5 pm, M-F
- Library Lot – Library parking only
- Garfield Lot – No posted restrictions, but presumably school parking only during school hours
- Parking Garages, Lot #5, Castle Noel Lot, County Elmwood Lot, and County Administrative Lot – No posted restrictions

Parking Lot and Garage Conditions

A general survey evaluated the condition of the City-owned or maintained parking lots and garages with the following observations:

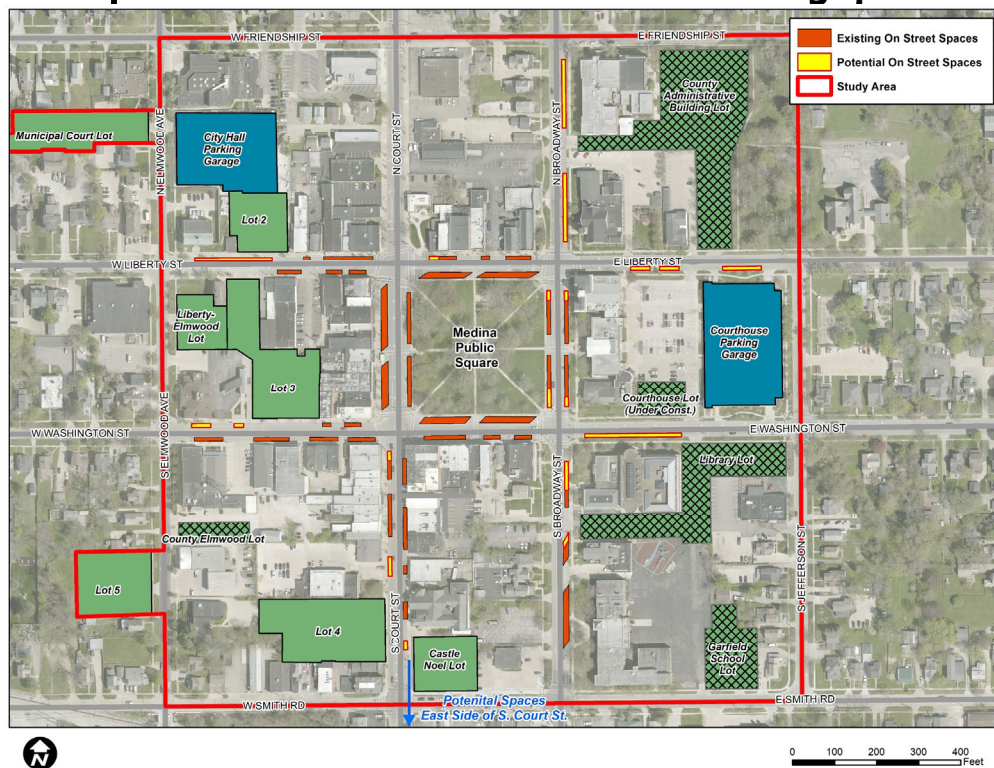
- The parking garages, Municipal Court Lot, Castle Noel Lot, and Lot 4 were in adequate condition.
- Lot 2 and Lot 3 had surface areas with some cracking and shifting. As previously noted, Lot 2 is the site of a pending redevelopment.
- The Liberty-Elmwood Lot had areas in poor condition including significant asphalt cracking and an area that appears to have been saw cut, which had deteriorated.
- Lot 5 was in very poor condition with pavement reduced to loose asphalt or dirt/sand in some areas.

On-Street Parking

As shown on Map 3, all on-street parking is located on the square or directly to the south and west. No on-street parking is located to the north or east of the square. In addition, though outside of the study area, no on-street parking is available in the South Town area.

Additional on-street parking may be possible on existing streets without the need for construction. Numerous streets, such as Liberty, Washington, and Broadway, appear to have sufficient width to accommodate new on-street spaces. Map 4 below illustrates areas that have the **potential** to be considered for an additional 60+ on-street parking spaces.

Map 4 – Potential Additional On-Street Parking Spaces



PARKING SURVEY

Survey Information and Methodology

Following the parking inventory, a survey of parking spaces was conducted in December of 2022 and January of 2023. The time periods were selected in an effort to document parking in a time of year with *relatively* high parking demand (December) and *relatively* low parking demand (January).

In both time periods, counts were taken on the following dates and times with the intent to illustrate parking throughout the day on both weekdays and weekends:

- Tuesday – 9 am, Noon, and 7 pm
- Thursday – 9 am, Noon, and 7 pm
- Saturday– 9 am, Noon, and 7 pm

Overall, the 21 different street sections, parking lots, and parking garages were surveyed 18 times for a total of 378 total surveys.

Survey Results

Results of the parking survey were recorded in Geographic Information System (GIS) data tables. The data was then condensed and formatted in tables recording counts for December (Table 1) and January (Table 2) found in Appendix A. Each table includes parking count information for all locations in the Parking Study Area for all days and times.

Parking observed at less than 85% capacity is generally considered to have available parking, while parking at 85% capacity or higher indicates a shortage of available parking. In Tables 1 and 2, counts of 85% or higher are highlighted in yellow to indicate streets, lots, or garages that were near or at capacity.

As noted in Tables 1 and 2, significant parking by employees working on the Courthouse addition project was observed, which is not typical. The majority of employees utilized the Courthouse parking garage and the County Administrative Lot, the latter of which included parking spaces occupied by construction job trailers.

THE FOLLOWING GENERAL TRENDS WERE OBSERVED FROM THE PARKING SURVEY TABLES:

- ***For every count, parking was overall available in the study area.***
Though there was variability by location and time, in every count, hundreds of public parking spaces were available.
- ***Parking Lots, Garages, and On-Street Spaces were very rarely at full capacity.***
On only 15 occasions (4%), an individual parking lot, garage, or on-street spaces section was full. In the remaining 363 counts (96%) the lots, garages, and on-street spaces had available spaces.
- ***Parking Lots, Garages, and On-Street Spaces were not typically at or above 85% capacity.***
On only 61 occasions (16%), an individual parking lot, garage, or on-street spaces section was at or above 85% capacity. In the remaining 317 counts (84%), the lots, garages, and on-street spaces had available spaces. Areas with the most frequent high occupancy were the Castle Noel Lot, Parking Lot 4, West Liberty Street, and the north and west sides of the Square.
- ***The highest parking occupancy rates occur around noon on weekdays in December.***
The highest occupancy rates were 63% and 64% at noon on Tuesday (12/6) and Thursday (12/15), respectively. In both instances, over 500 parking spaces were available in the study area.

PARKING SURVEY MAPPING

As previously discussed, detailed tables were created for the parking survey based on data recorded in GIS data tables. Spatial data was also formatted in GIS software and standardized into maps. Appendix B includes Maps 6 through 11 which geographically display survey results.

Maps 6 and 7 provide the overall average parking occupancy in the study area over the total 18 parking counts in December and January, respectively. Maps 8 and 9 illustrate the highest counts in each month and Maps 10 and 11 show the lowest counts in each month.

THE FOLLOWING GENERAL TRENDS WERE OBSERVED FROM THE PARKING SURVEY MAPS:

- ***Averages - Maps 6 and 7***

- Lots off of Elmwood Street, lots east of Broadway Street, and parking garages saw low average occupancy.
- Lot 4 had moderate occupancy in December and Lots 2 and Lot 3 had moderate occupancy in December and January.
- The Castle Noel lot saw high average occupancy in December and low average occupancy in January.
- Generally, on-street parking on the square, South Court Street, West Liberty Street, and West Washington Street saw moderate parking occupancy. However, these on-street spaces had average parking occupancy of less than 85%, with the exception of spaces on the north side of the square.

- ***High Counts – Maps 8 and 9***

- Both high counts occurred on weekdays at noon.
- In December, on-street parking on the square had high occupancy. In addition, lots south and west of the square also saw high occupancy. Lots and the County Garage east of Broadway Street saw moderate occupancy.
- In January, on-street parking on the north and south sides of the square and West Liberty Street had high occupancy. Lots and on-street parking west of the square had moderate occupancy. Lots and the County Garage east of Broadway Street the square also saw moderate occupancy. Lots on Elmwood Street, Lot 4, and the Castle Noel Lot had low occupancy.

- ***Low Counts – Maps 10 and 11***

- In both low counts, lots and garages had low occupancy, with the exception of the Castle Noel Lot, which saw high occupancy in December.
- Most on-street parking saw low occupancy in both low counts. However, moderate occupancy was observed on the north side of the square, West Liberty Street, West Washington Street, and South Court Street (January Only).

WAYFINDING SURVEY

Wayfinding Signs

A survey of all wayfinding signs related to parking was conducted in December of 2022 to identify signs which directed visitors to destinations and parking. The survey identified the following sign types:

Directional Destinations



Directional Parking – Custom



Directional Parking – Standard



Directional Destinations & Parking



Parking Lot Identification



Informational Sign

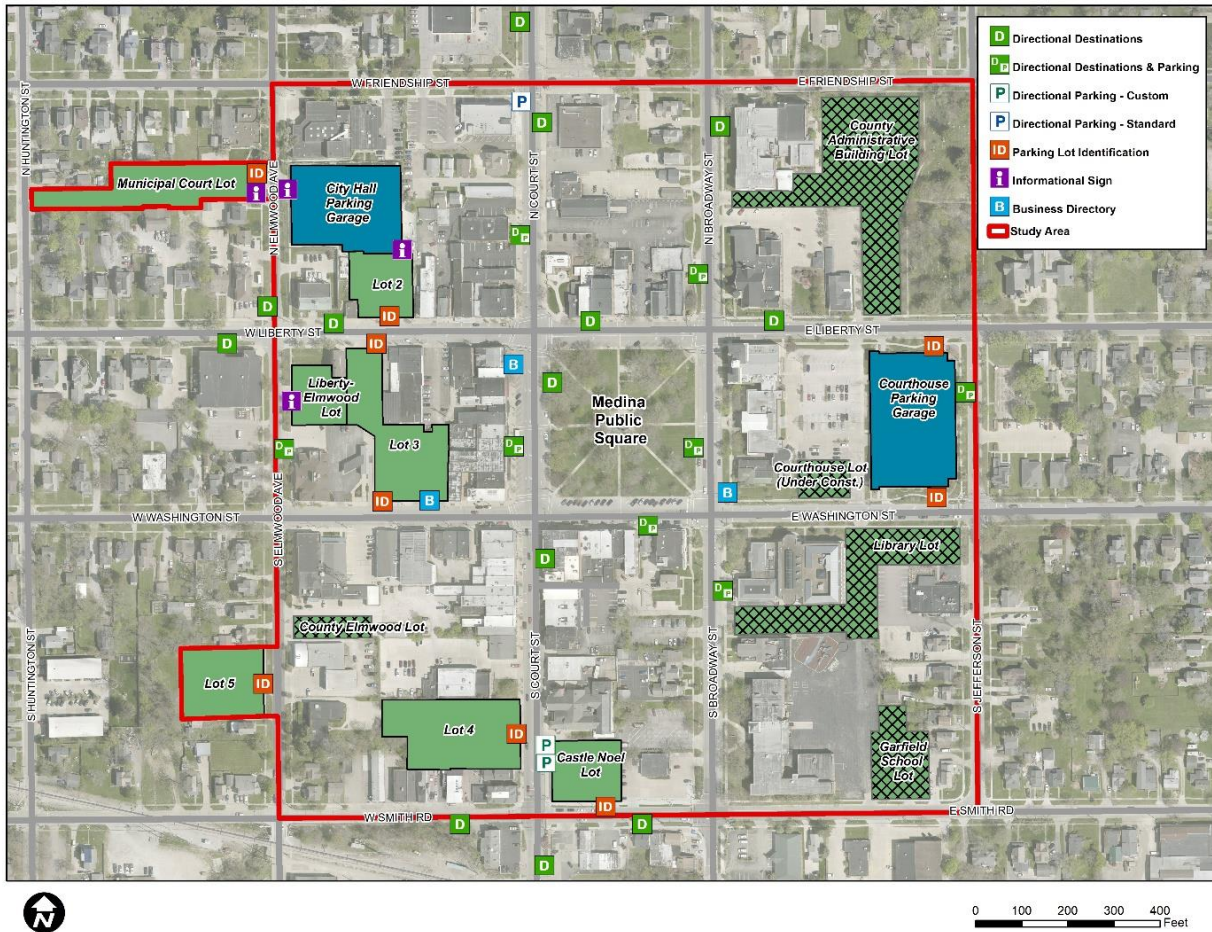


Business Directory



Map 5 on the following page indicates the location of the above wayfinding signs in Downtown Medina.

Map 5 – Wayfinding Signs



THE FOLLOWING GENERAL TRENDS WERE OBSERVED FROM THE WAYFINDING SURVEY:

- City-owned or controlled lots and garages were generally well identified and incorporated consistent Parking Lot Identification Signs. The only exceptions were the Liberty-Elmwood Lot and the City Hall Parking Garage entrance off of North Elmwood Street. These locations did not have Parking Lot Identification signs consistent with the other lots and garages.
- School, Library, and County owned parking lots generally did not have identification signs.
- Numerous signs around the downtown directed visitors to destinations and points of interest.
- Directional Parking Signs were installed in many locations. However, the signs had different formats and were not present in many instances.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that, as a whole, public parking in Downtown Medina is capable of supporting the current parking demand. The majority of parking counts for on-street parking spaces, public lots, and garages resulted in occupancies of less than 50%. On all counts, hundreds of parking spaces were available in the study area.

Higher parking counts were observed in December around the square and south and west of the square. These can be attributed to the draw of the area during the holiday season in addition to typical parking for visitors, employees, and residents. Though parking at these times was generally available, parking in close proximity to a destination, such as Castle Noel, was not always readily available.

The ability of a visitor, employee, or resident to walk a small to moderate distance is essential for a downtown area. As noted above, free public parking was always available to those looking to park downtown. The perception of a lack of parking often stems from the lack of available parking very near a destination. This may be the most pronounced for visitors to Downtown Medina who may not be aware of available parking which exists a block away from their destination.

Parking occupancy differences between Lot 3 and the Liberty-Elmwood Lot may illustrate the lack of awareness of parking and the reluctance to walk a moderate distance. The lots are adjacent and have similar time restrictions, though the Liberty-Elmwood Lot is accessed from South Elmwood Street. Lot 3 had times with high and moderate occupancy while the Liberty-Elmwood Lot never approached half full and was often empty.

Recommendations

General recommendations for future parking considerations in Downtown Medina include the following, which are not in order of priority:

- 1) Continue to monitor and evaluate the parking in the downtown and its effects on businesses, employees, residents, and visitors.
- 2) Maintain currently available public parking and work to extend existing parking agreements with private property owners.
- 3) Encourage businesses and organizations with private parking areas to discuss the possibility of shared parking agreements, particularly when uses have complimentary hours of operation.
- 4) Consider additional public parking options, particularly in the southern portion of the study area and South Town, which have been identified for redevelopment and do not currently have public parking.
- 5) Evaluate adding on-street parking spaces within and around the study area. Additional on-street spaces are a cost-effective opportunity to add public parking to the downtown.
- 6) Anticipate repairs or reconstruction of Lot 5 to bring the lot to an acceptable condition and conduct necessary maintenance to the Liberty-Elmwood Lot. Continue regular maintenance of all other City parking lots and garages.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the downtown residential Parking Permit program.
- 8) Consider additions and alterations to wayfinding signage to direct visitors to public parking in the downtown area. Wayfinding signage should utilize a consistent design throughout the downtown area. When Lot 2 is redeveloped, as anticipated, relocate the Parking Lot Identification sign to the Liberty-Elmwood Lot.

APPENDIX A – PARKING SURVEY TABLES

Table 1 – Parking Survey December

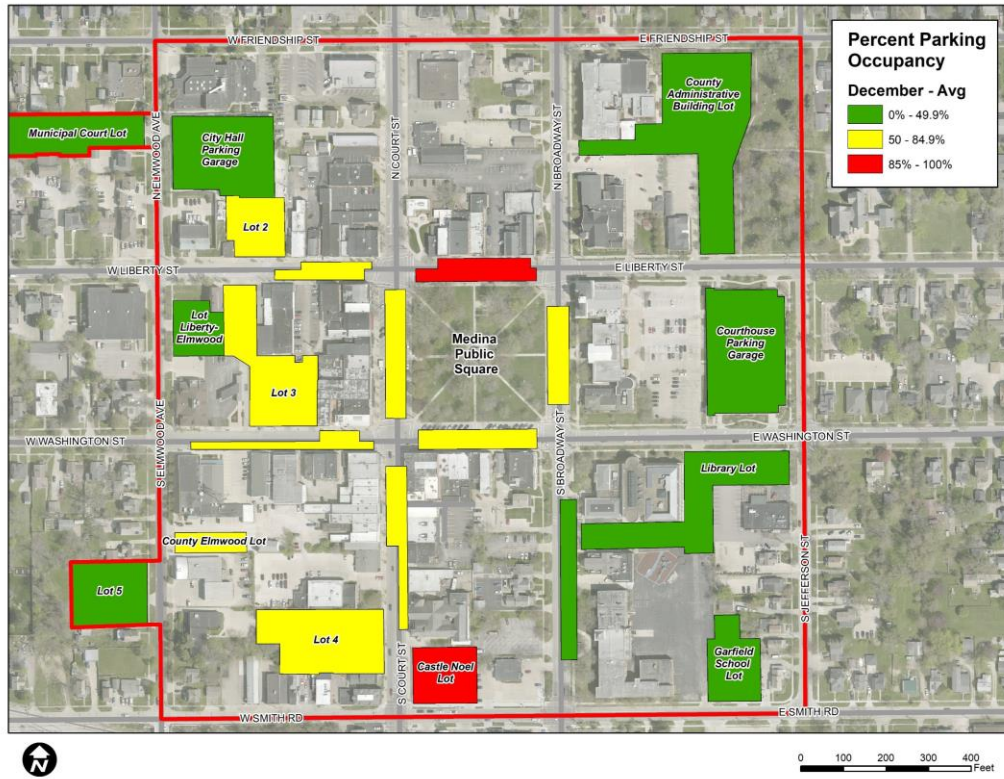
Parking	Location	Parking Counts									Total Spaces
		Tuesday			Thursday			Saturday			
		9 AM	Noon	7 PM	9 AM	Noon	7 PM	9 AM	Noon	7 PM	
Parking Lots											
Parking Lot 2	W. Liberty St. - North Side	3	31	18	15	29	31	15	36	36	37
Parking Lot 3	W. Liberty St. & W. Washington St.	44	76	65	51	89	84	36	88	59	97
Parking Lot 4	S. Court St. - West Side	17	64	48	22	68	72	13	70	72	77
Parking Lot 5	S. Elmwood Ave. - West Side	3	3	3	4	4	6	5	10	5	38
Liberty-Elmwood Lot	S. Elmwood Ave. & W. Liberty St.	0	6	1	1	5	13	7	10	1	40
Castle Noel Lot	S. Court St. & E. Smith Rd.	15	45	45	33	45	38	45	45	50	45
Municipal Court Lot	N. Elmwood Ave. - West Side	46	29	5	28	29	1	5	3	0	62
County Administrative Lot*	N. Broadway St. & E. Liberty St.	116	95	13	107	88	9	18	18	86	151
County Elmwood Lot	S. Elmwood Ave - E. Side	13	19	3	14	23	3	9	23	8	23
Library Lot	S. Broadway St. & E. Washington St.	14	51	44	44	61	50	2	33	29	76
Garfield School Lot	E. Smith Rd. - North Side	39	47	0	38	42	0	0	0	2	63
Totals	-	317	466	245	357	483	307	155	336	348	709
Parking Garages											
City Hall Garage	N. Elmwood Ave.	103	112	60	95	91	65	41	65	67	202
Courthouse Garage*	E. Liberty St. & E. Washington St.	218	203	43	247	196	30	51	75	31	351
Totals	-	321	315	103	342	287	95	92	140	98	553
On Street Spaces											
S. Broadway St.	Washington St. to Smith Rd.	3	3	0	2	3	3	0	1	5	11
S. Court St.	Washington St. to Smith Rd.	3	14	11	11	15	18	7	17	17	18
W. Liberty St.	Elmwood Ave. to Court St.	9	12	12	12	14	11	8	12	13	14
W. Washington St.	Elmwood Ave. to Court St.	3	13	9	9	11	14	13	15	15	16
Public Square	East Side	12	11	1	17	17	12	2	12	9	18
Public Square	North Side	12	18	17	13	20	19	17	20	18	20
Public Square	South Side	22	20	21	27	26	23	6	26	23	28
Public Square	West Side	8	27	12	22	27	30	12	31	28	31
Totals	-	72	118	83	113	133	130	65	134	128	156
Total Occupied Spaces	-	710	899	431	812	903	532	312	610	574	1418
Total Available Spaces	-	708	519	987	606	515	886	1106	808	844	-
Percent Occupied	-	50%	63%	30%	57%	64%	38%	22%	43%	40%	100%
Count Date	-	12/6/22			12/15/22			12/10/22			-
<i>*Counts were higher than normal due to significant parking by construction employees working on the Courthouse addition</i>								Parking > 85% of Capacity			

Table 2 – Parking Survey January

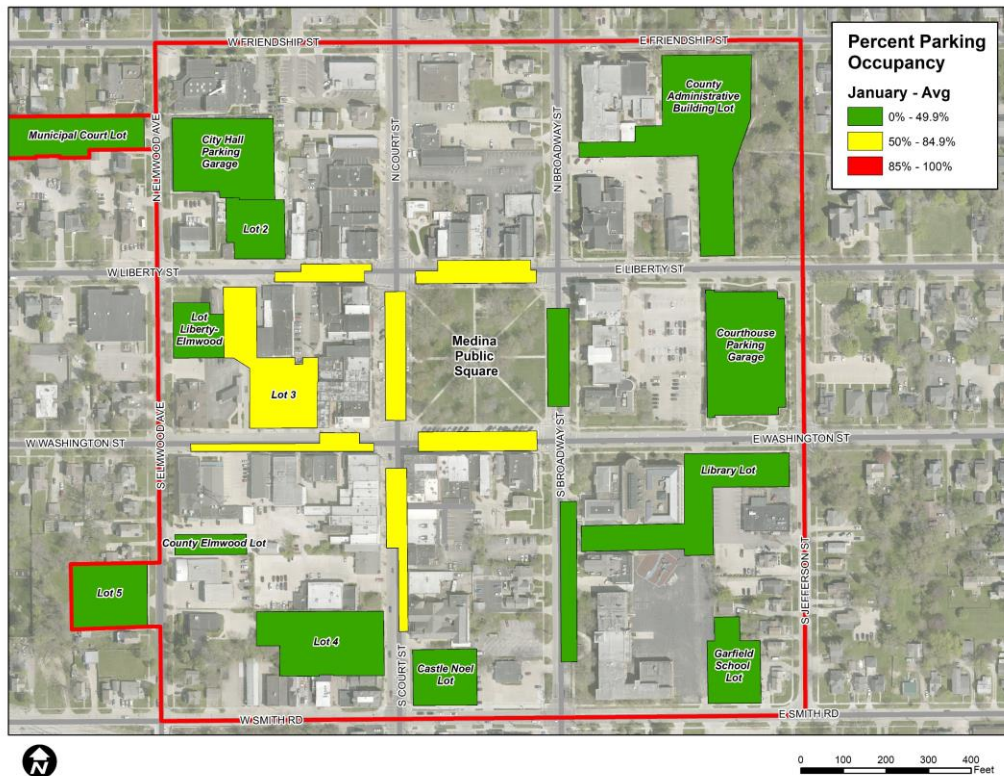
Parking	Location	Parking Counts									Total Spaces
		Tuesday			Thursday			Saturday			
		9 AM	Noon	7 PM	9 AM	Noon	7 PM	9 AM	Noon	7 PM	
Parking Lots											
Parking Lot 2	W. Liberty St. - North Side	3	28	13	7	14	27	14	28	31	37
Parking Lot 3	W. Liberty St. & W. Washington St.	35	62	43	38	58	53	42	56	57	97
Parking Lot 4	S. Court St. - West Side	15	28	65	13	37	60	15	44	61	77
Parking Lot 5	S. Elmwood Ave. - West Side	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	38
Liberty-Elmwood Lot	S. Elmwood Ave. & W. Liberty St.	0	2	0	0	1	4	1	2	1	40
Castle Noel Lot	S. Court St. & E. Smith Rd.	10	15	5	5	15	12	6	29	42	45
Municipal Court Lot	N. Elmwood Ave. - West Side	37	22	2	33	34	1	9	4	1	62
County Administrative Lot*	N. Broadway St. & E. Liberty St.	87	81	8	84	72	6	9	8	6	151
County Elmwood Lot	S. Elmwood Ave - E. Side	7	18	5	13	14	4	12	15	1	23
Library Lot	S. Broadway St. & E. Washington St.	15	61	38	14	56	54	4	64	23	76
Garfield School Lot	E. Smith Rd. - North Side	46	46	0	42	50	0	0	1	0	63
Totals	-	256	364	181	251	353	222	114	252	225	709
Parking Garages											
City Hall Garage	N. Elmwood Ave.	96	100	38	81	97	41	34	36	20	202
Courthouse Garage*	E. Liberty St. & E. Washington St.	194	190	27	212	211	28	32	28	47	351
Totals	-	290	290	65	293	308	69	66	64	67	553
On Street Spaces											
S. Broadway St.	Washington St. to Smith Rd.	2	3	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	11
S. Court St.	Washington St. to Smith Rd.	5	11	5	2	5	14	10	18	15	18
W. Liberty St.	Elmwood Ave. to Court St.	8	12	9	9	12	13	11	13	12	14
W. Washington St.	Elmwood Ave. to Court St.	9	6	5	9	12	3	10	13	13	16
Public Square	East Side	4	6	0	9	9	4	2	3	9	15
Public Square	North Side	5	20	19	9	19	18	16	17	20	20
Public Square	South Side	15	26	5	15	20	23	8	18	23	28
Public Square	West Side	5	26	22	8	24	28	8	26	26	31
Totals	-	53	110	66	62	102	105	65	110	118	153
Total Occupied Spaces	-	599	764	312	606	763	396	245	426	410	-
Total Available Spaces	-	816	651	1103	809	652	1019	1170	989	1005	1415
Percent Occupied	-	42%	54%	22%	43%	54%	28%	17%	30%	29%	-
Count Date	-	1/24/23			1/19/23			1/21/23			-
<i>*Counts were higher than normal due to significant parking by construction employees working on the Courthouse addition</i>									Parking > 85% of Capacity		

APPENDIX B – PARKING MAPS

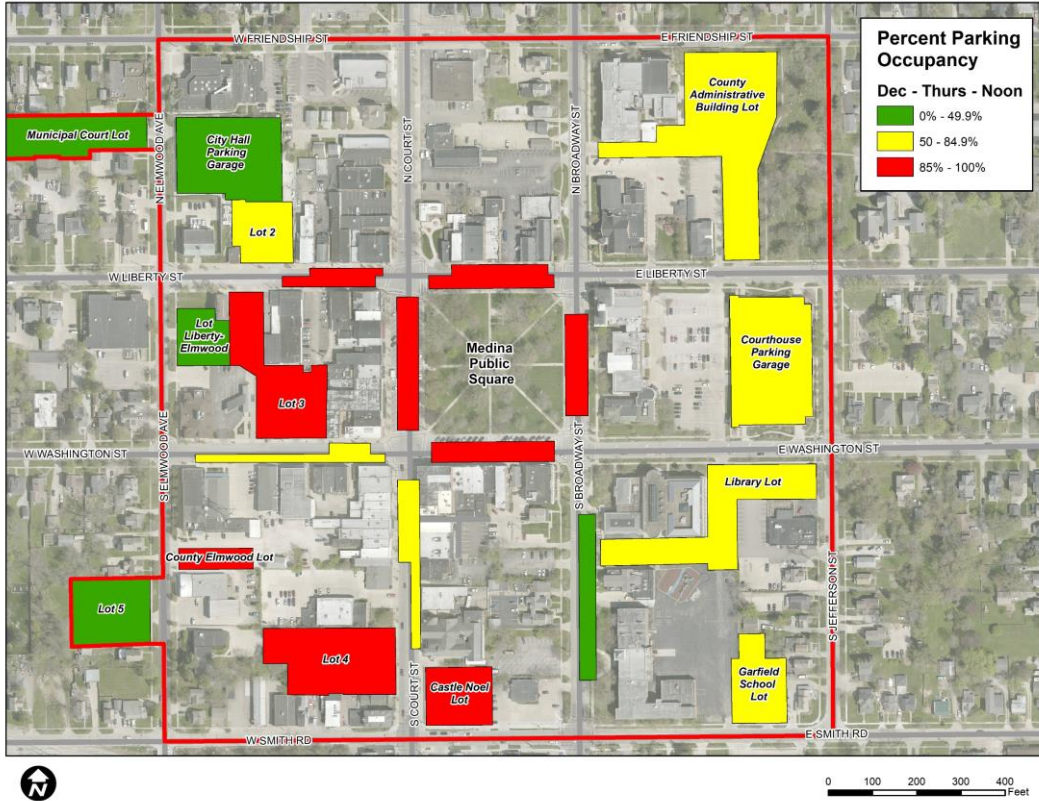
Map 6 – December Average Parking



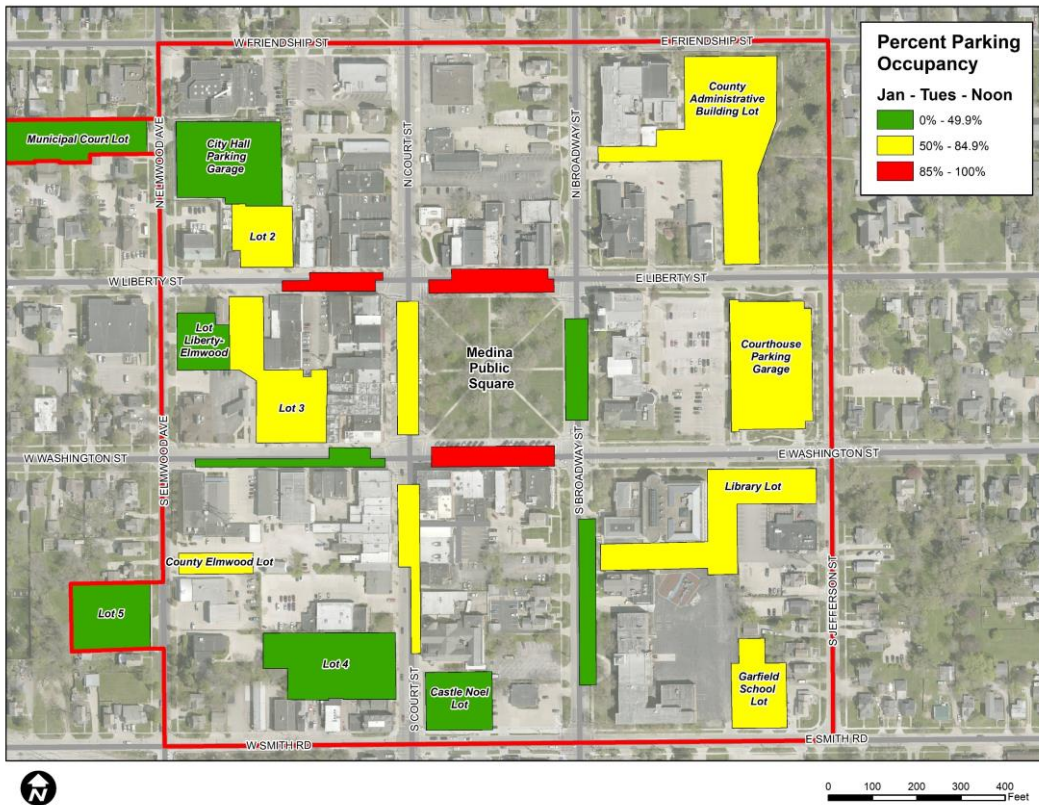
Map 7 – January Average Parking



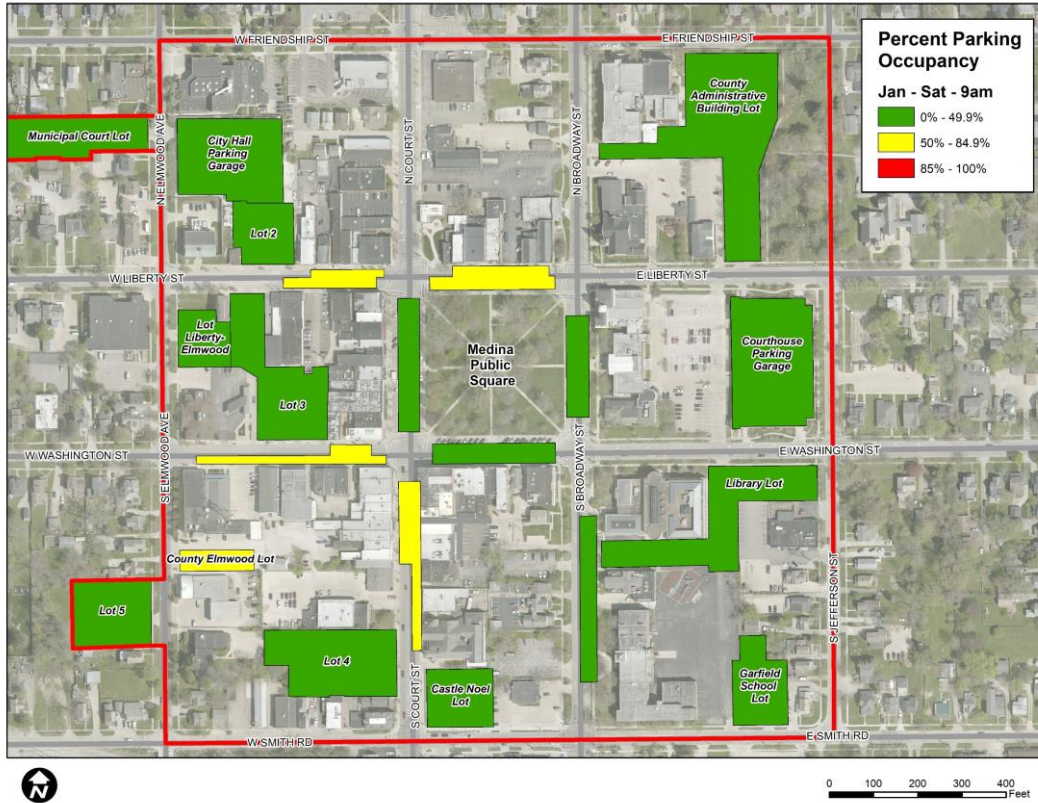
Map 8 – December High Parking (Thursday @ Noon)



Map 9 – January High Parking (Tuesday @ Noon)



Map 10 – December Low Parking (Saturday @ 9 AM)



Map 11 – January Low Parking (Saturday @ 9 AM)

