

Parking Conditions in Downtown Highland Park



**City of Highland Park
Central District Plan Update
August 2009**

OVERVIEW OF PARKING IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

Parking in downtown Highland Park has long been an issue that the City has contemplated. City policy, as it is implemented through zoning, strives to strike a balance between the parking needs of downtown patrons, the economic vitality of the City's commercial districts and the form of downtown development. As in many small cities and towns, achieving this balance in the City's Central District can be a challenge and requires foresight and a constant revisiting of the Master Plan.

Parking is a necessary and vital component of the downtown. It gives those who choose or are required to drive into the Central District the opportunity to visit and enjoy its many shops, offices, restaurants and places of employment. Although the parking element of downtown cannot be altogether eliminated, careful planning can ensure that parking is not over-emphasized or positioned in a manner that supplants critical commercial space or interrupts the pedestrian experience. The use of design standards such as angled on-street spaces, minimal private surface lots and clearly marked centralized parking can ensure that the City remains walkable and inviting to residents and visitors alike.

As you begin to consider the role of parking in the Central District and assist us in planning for the future, it may be helpful to think about past lessons and build on former Master Plan recommendations. The following links offer additional information and questions to keep in mind as you formulate your own thoughts on parking in the Central District.

[LINK TO WHAT THE 2001 MASTER PLAN SAYS ABOUT PARKING](#)

[LINK TO QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION](#)

EXISTING PUBLIC PARKING IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

There are a variety of parking options in the Central District including on-street parking, off-street surface lots and parking garages. A 2007 study of downtown parking conducted by Rich and Associates indicated that there are 2,616 public off-street spaces and 667 public on-street spaces in the Central District. In total, there are 3,283 public parking spaces, which accounts for 60% of the total parking in the Central District. In addition, there are 2,231 private off-street parking spaces in the Central District for a total number of 5,514 public and private parking spaces in the Central District.

Although the majority of parking spaces are available to all downtown patrons, some have been designated for handicap, commuter, employee and overnight use and permits are required for use of these spaces. Handicapped spaces are provided at all of the City-owned parking facilities. Commuter, employee and overnight spaces are located in various lots and facilities throughout the Central District.

Metered parking spaces are available at 5 of the 24 City-owned surface lots and allow parking for up to 12 hours. However, many of the City-owned lots provide free parking for a limited duration. Ten lots offer two-hour free parking and 9 lots offer three-hour free parking. Fifteen lots offer free parking after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends and most major holidays. Five lots offer free parking on Sundays and most major holidays.

Overnight parking between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. is prohibited on all public streets in the City of Highland Park from December 1–March 31 to accommodate snow removal. In the event there is no means of off-street parking, on-street parking permits may be granted upon application to the Police Department. Please click the following link for maps of the City’s existing public parking facilities.

[**LINK TO DOWNTOWN PARKING LOT MAPS**](#)

2007 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PARKING STUDY UPDATE BY RICH AND ASSOCIATES

Rich and Associates originally conducted an analysis of the parking supply and demand in the City’s Central District in 2001. In 2007, Rich and Associates updated the study to evaluate changes in parking demand as related to new and proposed development in the Central District.

Rich and Associates conducted parking counts of all off-street and on-street parking located in 20 blocks designated within the Central District. The study found that in the 5 year period between 2001 and 2007 the parking supply in the Central District increased by 517 spaces due to the construction of several public and private parking lots. Of the 517 added spaces, 99 spaces were public. This left a projected deficit of -541 spaces, a figure less than the -771 space deficit projected in the 2001 study. Building on the block by block analysis, Rich and Associates used a zone approach to identify two locations with the largest parking shortfalls: 1) the east and west sides of First Street from Elm Place to Laurel Avenue which had a projected shortfall of 392 spaces, and 2) Green Bay Road to east of Sheridan Road which had a projected shortfall of 366 spaces.

Overall, the analysis demonstrated that there is a need for additional parking in the Central District. However, Rich and Associates did note that while some individual blocks have substantial deficits and surpluses, “many blocks that have deficits are being served by blocks that have surpluses.”

Rich and Associates also found that, from 2001 through 2006, the peak occupancy periods of both on and off-street parking shifted from the 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. period to the 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. period, most likely a result of increased retail and banking activity. During the peak time, 77% of on-street parking spaces were occupied and 71% of off-street parking spaces were occupied. Rich and Associates attributes the increase in available parking and the shift in peak occupancy to changes in land use and the parking generation numbers used by the City to determine required parking.

Consultant Recommendations

Based on their findings, Rich and Associates suggested that the City consider the construction of additional parking facilities on blocks 8, 14 and 16. The study specifically recommended consideration of the development of a two level parking structure on the west half of block 14 and either a one level parking structure on the east half of block 14 or a two level parking structure on block 16. In each case, the net gain of spaces would be dependent upon the preferred schematics of the site. Block 14 is located adjacent to the portion of railroad tracks that run from Central Avenue to Elm Street along St. Johns Avenue and Block 16 is bounded by Central Avenue, St. Johns Avenue and Laurel Avenue.

The High Cost of Free Parking

The 2007 study estimated that the cost of constructing a parking structure on Block 14 would be \$46,209 per added parking space. The estimated cost of constructing a parking structure on Block 16 was between \$25,216 and \$28,530 per added parking space depending on the number of decks being constructed. The study presented two parking deck options on Block 16: 1) a parking structure with a partial level below grade, one at grade level and two supported levels which could accommodate 365 spaces for a net add of 240 spaces and a total construction cost of \$6,052,000, or 2) a parking structure with a partial level below grade, one at grade and one supported level that would accommodate 287 spaces for a net add of 171 spaces and a total construction cost of \$4,879,000. The projected difference in cost between potential new spaces on Block 14 and on Block 16 is attributed to the existing levels of depressed and above-grade parking on Block 14.

The construction costs projected by Rich and Associates are fairly consistent with the costs incurred by the City in its construction of the downtown parking deck along the commuter tracks on Block 15 in 2002. In that instance, 155 new off-street parking spaces cost \$5.8 million, which amounted to approximately \$37,419 per new parking space in 2002 dollars. Construction costs for the total of 274 parking spaces equaled approximately \$21,168 per space in 2002 dollars. This cost reflected work done by a design-build firm that handled both the design and construction of the structure. To read the full parking reports and recommendations made by Rich and Associates in 2001 and 2007, please click on the following links.

[**LINK TO 2007 RICH AND ASSOCIATES STUDY**](#)

STAFF SURVEY OF AVAILABLE DOWNTOWN PARKING

To supplement the 2007 study conducted by Rich and Associates, City staff conducted an informal survey of available on-street and surface lot parking in the Central District on a Friday in June from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The study was intended to identify available

parking spaces within a 3-minute walk of the major intersections in the Central District: Sheridan Road and Central Avenue, St. Johns Avenue and Central Avenue, First Street and Central Avenue and Second Street and Central Avenue. During the observation period, staff found that parking was generally available in most inventoried blocks and lots, although the number of empty spaces varied by location. Staff also observed a high rate of turnover in all areas of parking.

Greater parking availability was observed east of the Metra train tracks on Sheridan Road and in the 3 parking lots off of Central Avenue at the eastern boundary of the Central District (Central District ES Lot and Ori Lots North and South). Ample parking was also available in the two parking garages that flank the West and East side of the train tracks between Central Avenue and Laurel Avenue. Staff noted that the majority of cars parked in these two garages displayed employee sticker permits.

The fewest available parking spaces were observed on the block bounded by Second Street, Elm Place, First Street and Central Avenue. In this area, there were few available on-street spaces and the surface lots were nearly at capacity. It should be noted that staff did not track available parking on Central Street as the large majority of spaces were full and/or experiencing continual turnover throughout the observation period. The exact parking counts are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Available Parking Spaces in the Central District between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Friday, June 5, 2009

Location	Available Spaces
Sheridan Road between Central Avenue and Elm Place	8
Elm Place between First Street and Sheridan Road	6
St. Johns Avenue between Elm Place and Central Avenue	20
St. Johns Avenue between Central Avenue and Laurel Avenue	6
First Street between Elm Place and Central Avenue	2
First Street between Central Avenue and Laurel Avenue	0
Second Street between Elm Place and Central Avenue	2
Second Street between Central Avenue and Laurel Avenue	13
Laurel Avenue between First Street and Second Street	4
Ori Lots North and South	29
Central Avenue ES Lot	22
St. Johns Avenue North Lot	16
CBD Parking Garage East	69
CBD Parking Garage West	31
First Street Elm South Lot	5
Second Street Elm South Lot	1

Renaissance Surface Lot	1
Second Street Central South Lot	4

EXISTING DOWNTOWN PARKING POLICIES

As currently written, the City Code requires all new development to provide on-site parking which works to maintain the overall existing parking demand by limiting upper floor development. Parking requirements are determined based on the proposed use. More intense uses such as restaurants are required to have more off-street parking than less intense uses such as offices.

Because there are many narrow lots in the Central District and the majority of the downtown is built out, the ability to provide on-site parking is not always an option. The Code, therefore, offers several alternatives to the parking requirements. The “Reuse Rule,” Special Exception, Fee-in-Lieu, and Planned Development processes all provide property owners with options aside from providing on-site parking. Additionally, the Code provides for adjustments in the required off-street parking if it can be demonstrated that the new development’s uses are complementary in nature, utilized by patrons of other uses within 1,000 feet or within an area served by alternative transportation.

LINK TO CHAPTER 150, ARTICLE 8

Section 150.802(B): The “Reuse Rule”

Section 150.802(B) of the Zoning Code (the “Reuse Rule”) pertains to changes in use and allows new permitted uses to replace existing conforming uses in the B4 and B5 zoning districts without providing additional parking, even if the new use requires an increase in off-street parking or loading. However, if the existing use is expanded and the floor area of the existing building is increased so as to require additional off-street parking or loading, the additional parking or loading must be provided.

The Reuse Rule encourages structures in the commercial districts to be remodeled or rehabbed by not requiring parking for changes in use that result in an increase in required parking. The reuse rule is not applicable to Special Exceptions, which must be granted by the City Council upon recommendation by the Plan Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals, because Special Exceptions expire upon a change in use or the demolition, removal or major structural alteration of the structure that has been granted the Special Exception(s).

The current regulations related to the reuse rule are the result of several amendments dating back to 1978, a brief history of which follows:

- Section 150.040.2.2 of the Zoning Ordinance of 1978 stipulated that a change in use or an expansion of a current use would require the provision of additional parking if the change in use or expansion required additional parking.

- The Zoning Code, as Amended in 1997, allowed uses in the B4 and B5 to alter, expand or change the use without requiring the provision of additional parking.
- In May of 1999, the Plan Commission recommended the removal of all parking exemptions in the B4 and B5 districts. The matter was discussed at a City Council pre-session meeting in October 2000. Highland Park Chamber of Commerce representatives in attendance at that meeting expressed concern regarding negative impacts of the proposed changes on the economics of property improvements and the leasing potential of space in the commercial districts. The matter was tabled for a workshop and further study. The issue was referred to the newly-formed Intra-City Parking Committee, which concurred with the need for revision of the Ordinance. Following full and lengthy discussions at a number of City Council meetings, a modified version of the Plan Commission's recommendation was approved. This compromise, in place today, increased the amount of the fee-in-lieu parking requirement to approach the level of the construction cost of parking spaces, and allowed exemptions for a change in use, but required additional parking for an expansion of the floor space devoted to a use for the B4 and B5 districts.

Special Exceptions

The Special Exception process authorizes exceptions to the parking regulations of the Zoning Code to permit construction or reconstruction of a structure in a manner that is consistent with the Master Plan and the City's planning policies and objectives. The City Council is authorized to grant two types of Special Exceptions: 1) reductions in the amount of required off-street parking for new structures, and 2) reductions or waivers of the required off-street parking for an existing structure or use or for a change in an existing structure. Prior to City Council consideration of a request for a Special Exception, the Zoning Board of Appeals (or the Plan Commission in certain circumstances) must, with the concurring vote of four members, forward written findings of fact, per the standards listed in Section 150.1606 of the Zoning Code.

In the case of new structures, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed development will not utilize as much off-street parking as required and that the strict enforcement of the off-street parking requirements would prohibit the development of the property with a use that is consistent with the City's planning and zoning policies. For Special Exceptions related to additions and alterations to existing structures, applicants must demonstrate that the existing parking for the structure was lawful and conforming at the time it was constructed and is either conforming or lawfully non-conforming with respect to the number of off-street parking spaces provided and that either: 1) the proposed alteration or change in use will either not increase or expand the non-conformity, or 2) the proposed alteration or change in use will not utilize as much off-street parking as required by the off-street parking regulations.

Under Section 150.1608, the City Council may impose additional conditions and restrictions on a Special Exception as necessary. It is important to note that each Special

Exception expires upon a change in use of the property or upon demolition, removal or major structural alteration of any structure located on the property unless otherwise contemplated by the Ordinance.

The City has rarely received a formal application for a Special Exception in a commercial zoning district. In 2003, the First Bank of Highland Park thoroughly discussed with the City Council the possibility of pursuing a Special Exception to the off-street parking requirements in order to expand their existing facility. After taking the cost of the fee-in-lieu payment into consideration, the First Bank of Highland Park chose to relocate to an existing space in Northbrook that could better satisfy their expansion needs. In 2007, the City Council granted a one parking space Special Exception for a new commercial office building at 2642 Waukegan Avenue (zoned B1A) to accommodate a landscape island pursuant to the City's landscape planting and screening regulations.

The lack of Special Exception requests in the commercial zoning districts may be due to the fee-in-lieu payment cost per space, their expiration upon change in use and the fact that downtown developments larger than 10,000 sq. ft. are subject to the planned development process as a result of text amendments to Article V (Planned Developments) in November 2007. Accordingly, the 10,000 sq. ft. trigger restricts the ability of many mid and larger sized developments to pursue the Special Exception process.

Fee-in-Lieu Payments

The City Council, at its discretion, may require fee-in-lieu payments for each parking space not provided. The City's Annual Fee Resolution establishes fees for the payment-in-lieu of off-street parking by zoning district. In the Central District, the cost per space not provided in the B4, B5 and RO districts is currently \$15,000. The City Council may consider requests for reductions in the base fee-in-lieu payment. Based on parking deck construction costs incurred by the City in 2002 which averaged between \$21,168 and \$37,419 per space, the fee-in-lieu payment as currently structured only partially funds the cost of off-street parking space construction and assumes that the City will subsidize a certain portion of the construction costs.

Collected payment-in-lieu fees are deposited into an account within the parking fund and are intended to be used for the acquisition and maintenance of public off-street parking and loading facilities within the zoning district where the subject property is located. However, the Finance Department's records show no activity recorded in the fee-in-lieu payment account for the past several years which shows the fee-in-lieu payment to be a limited source of revenue.

Impacts of Existing Parking Regulations

The City's existing parking regulations support the current form of development in the Central District. The City's parking standards can have a number of possible impacts on development in the Central District: without relief, small-scale infill commercial

development on narrow downtown lots is discouraged because it is essentially impossible to locate all required parking on site. Redevelopment requires lot combinations which result in larger-scale projects and/or a suburban type of development whereby commercial properties are situated on large parking lots. Larger scale redevelopment in the downtown has not been common due to challenges of property acquisition and height and density limits.

COMMISSION INVOLVEMENT IN PARKING

Two of the City's Commissions, the Intra-City Parking Commission and the Traffic Commission, meet periodically to weigh in on parking and traffic-related matters in the Central District and make recommendations to the City Council. Further information, including the agendas for upcoming meetings, can be found on each Commission's webpage.

Intra-City Parking Commission

The ICPC is charged with reviewing, advising, and making recommendations to the City Council regarding the administration, provision, designation, and enforcement of parking within the commercial, industrial, and residential/office zoning districts of the City.

[LINK TO INTRA-CITY PARKING COMMISSION WEBPAGE](#)

Traffic Commission

The Traffic Commission is charged with investigating ways and means to coordinate traffic activities, encourage educational activities in traffic matters in the schools and the community, and receiving complaints having to do with traffic conditions. The Traffic Commission also recommends to the City Council ways and means of improving vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions throughout the City through the addition to, the deletion of, the modification of, the administration of, and the enforcement of traffic regulations as well as the placing in effect of other measures for the elimination of traffic hazards and other dangers to the public and any or all matters relating to traffic.

[LINK TO TRAFFIC COMMISSION WEBPAGE](#)

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. What is an acceptable distance or time for you to walk between your parked car and your downtown destination?
2. Do you prefer to use on-street parking spaces, surface lots, parking decks or underground parking?
3. Do you feel that you know enough about available downtown public parking options and parking regulations?
4. How can the City publicize and encourage downtown visitors to use its available off-street public parking?
5. Do you prefer the aesthetics and practicality of concentrated parking in larger-scale parking lots or dispersed parking in smaller-scale infill parking lots?
6. Do you think off-street parking should be provided on every newly developed lot, or should the required off-street parking for several lots be pooled together if the option exists?
7. What obstacles to parking most affect your impressions, experiences and willingness to drive downtown?
8. What would encourage you to take alternative transportation to your downtown destination?
9. How do you envision future parking options along the Metra rail tracks?
10. Where do you feel that more parking is needed?
11. Where do you feel that less parking is needed?
12. Would you be willing to pay higher costs for parking (e.g. meters, permits, citations) to fund additional parking improvements such as increased capacity in the Central District?

WHAT THE 2001 CENTRAL DISTRICT PLAN SAYS ABOUT PARKING

3.1.8 Transit Support and Parking Uses

Transit support and parking are those uses which are located along the Metra rail line and support the commuter function with parking and traffic access designed to facilitate the picking up and dropping off of passengers. In addition, municipal parking is located throughout the commercial core and provides an important resource for various downtown users. In order for the downtown to continue to be successful, existing parking areas have to be maintained and possibly expanded in strategic locations.

Transit Support and Parking Uses Plan Policies

- Maintain current commuter parking facilities. As with all parking facilities, seek additional ways to promote shared use in non-peak commuter periods such as weekends.
- Continually analyze the supply of, and need for, off-street parking facilities.
- Provide adequate on-street and off-street parking for consumers and employees, at appropriate locations, through joint cooperation between the public and private sector.
- Continue to market the existing public parking options currently available in the commercial core area of the Central District.
- Structure access and parking to assure that the Central District is convenient to use and can accommodate contemporary business, shopping and living style mandates.
- Support automobile access to the downtown core from the north and south of the pedestrian and shopping corridor along Central Avenue.
- Integrate structured as well as surface parking lot facilities into developments that can serve the pedestrian shopping areas of the commercial core.
- Design and locate parking facilities in a manner that does not detract from the pedestrian environment.

3.5 Traffic Circulation, and Parking Policies

The access component of this Central District Plan incorporates the existing pattern of vehicular access and identifies road network improvements that would facilitate movement through the Central District. Findings and recommendations regarding road improvements, and changes to circulation and traffic operations, can be found in the CBD Traffic Task Force Study presented to the City Council in 1999.

This Central District Plan incorporates a pedestrian pathways network to augment the vehicular circulation system (see Figure 8: Circulation Plan). The pedestrian pathways plan has been developed to suggest how direct connections to local destinations, such as schools, parks, and public facilities, can be accomplished without every trip requiring a vehicle or access to a major arterial roadway.

3.5.4 Downtown Parking Policy

Every downtown district is perplexed with the issue of providing adequate parking for retail customers, employees and office workers. Although it is a difficult issue to evaluate objectively, it is an issue that must be addressed in order to maintain a successful and vital downtown. “Perception” and “problem” are two words that often come up in many discussions regarding parking issues, especially those pertaining to downtown areas. For example, a central business area may have an appropriate supply of parking space available in relation to the amount of retail and office space located there, but the parking is located in an area viewed as inconvenient or unsafe by potential users. In general, few people desire to park more than 300 to 500 feet from their destination. Parking that is located further than that is largely viewed as too far away to use. Similarly, parking may be located in underground garages but sometimes these are perceived as dangerous or inconvenient to use. The key to successful parking solutions is locating available space in areas that are convenient, or least perceived as such, by the user.

Highland Park’s downtown parking issues are very common problems encountered in many downtown areas. People, in general, like to park as close to their destination as possible. However, there is limited on-street space located directly in front of the downtown stores and offices. Employees of these businesses compete with shoppers and visitors to the downtown. The search for close parking is then compounded by people driving around looking for on street parking close to their destination and employees parking in prime spaces.

In March 1999, a Highland Park Department of Community Development Department inventory indicated a total of more than 1,800 parking spaces in the Pedestrian Commercial Core area located in surface lots, garages and on streets. Given recent development activity, it is possible that the current parking supply may not be sufficient to support a higher level of development intensity in the Pedestrian Commercial Core area. However, it should be noted that downtown areas that thrive usually do so in spite of parking limitations, not because ideal parking exists.

Highland Park now has below grade parking north and south of Central Avenue in the Pedestrian Commercial Core. Some persons object to using underground parking from a safety standpoint. Others see it as a benefit to be out of the weather. However, the use of garage parking as at least part of the parking supply is necessary if a true pedestrian environment is going to prevail in the Pedestrian Commercial Core – that core area being defined by the boundaries formed by Green Bay Road, Laurel Avenue, Linen Avenue, and Elm Place. Parking in the core area is compounded by the use of significant area for Metra commuter parking. Surface lots and “behind the store” parking is scattered throughout the core area with a significant amount located east of the Metra railroad tracks. These surface lots are heavily used and empirical experience indicates that employee and office users make use of these parking spaces as they are usually filled early in the day before most stores and shops are open.

There is no doubt that parking is an important factor for the continued success of the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area. The status of parking in the area is a current area of study. The downtown parking supply is being evaluated through a separate parking analysis study that takes into consideration the finalized circulation plan and improvement recommendation from the CBD Traffic Task Force Study. To this end, the City Council commissioned a parking study for the Pedestrian Commercial Core area in the third quarter of the year 2000. This study will determine the current and future demand for area parking and, if there is such a need, suggest means to address that need. The parking study will be presented to the ICPC, a commission established by the City Council to monitor the parking study and subsequently to recommend what appropriate implementation measures should take place.

Standard parking ratios for retail and office uses are 5 and 3.5 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, respectively. These standard parking ratios are based on suburban-type development where all users arrive via cars and no reduction in parking demand occurs through transit, walking, or multiple purpose trips. In a downtown area, the parking ratio should be less than suburban development. The parking ratios designated in the Highland Park Zoning Ordinance for most retail and office uses range from 2.5 to 4 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, with most commercial core uses requiring 3.3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of leasable floor area. Given current conditions in the commercial core, a parking ratio covering both retail and office use of 3.3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area would be suitable for purposes of assessing overall parking needs. Residential apartments typically require 1.5 to 2 spaces per dwelling unit.

The Pedestrian Commercial Core area has a strong supply of parking in that there is a wide variety of parking, total number of spaces and the dispersal of parking facilities throughout the area. Of course, what everyone wants is an available parking space immediately in front of one’s destination when they want to be there. This cannot function as a standard however and the accommodations the shopper/visitor to the Central District makes are part of the equation in determining if parking is a problem or not and if that problem is real or perceived.

The best approach to parking improvement may be work toward a series of incremental enhancements specifically tailored to meet identified need. Then each parking improvement should be evaluated to determine its effect on the system as a whole. However, parking access in the Pedestrian Commercial Core area can be made more accommodating to the user through customer service oriented methods as well as physical improvements. Convenient parking can be incorporated into the retail core area by constructing parking garages above or below ground level retail and office space. This allows for close proximity of parking to the downtown without taking up valuable downtown retail land. Another method to make finding available parking less frustrating would be through a coordinated parking program for the entire area emphasized through a unified signage plan, directional signs, and availability options communicated to parking space seekers through signs, garage attendants or digital electronic display boards. There are good examples of that kind of communication in the area now, channeling parkers to the Laurel Avenue entrance to the Port Clinton garage. Ways should be sought to expand that approach so that the shopper/visitor is given direction to parking as they pass through one of the gateways to the district and the core retail area within the district. Ideally, that person should feel they are being greeted and helped from the moment they enter one of these gateways.

Parking Policies for the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area

- The present off-street parking strategy - locating parking around the outer edges of the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area of the Central District should be continued and expanded when necessary due to intensification through new development or the identification of localized shortages in one part or another of the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area. Figure 3, Illustrative Concept, indicates possible outer edge locations for such parking.
- If warranted through a detailed parking study, a public parking structure dedicated for shopper/visitor patrons should be considered to be located where the existing parking lots adjacent to the METRA tracks presently exist. The primary focus area shall be from Elm Place to Laurel Avenue between St. Johns Avenue and First Street. Such a structure should be designed to present a gracious wall enclosing the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area from the open, parking dominated space on either side of the Metra railroad tracks.
- Structure parking should be incorporated into the design of any major retail, residential and mixed-

use developments in the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area.

- On-street parking should be retained to the maximum degree possible, but allow for alterations where key pedestrian/aesthetic improvements intersect with new development projects and new structure parking development.
- Parking should be accommodated through a combination of private parking facilities for new developments and common or shared off-street parking for existing local businesses. This can be accomplished through agreements made with owners of commercial core office buildings, churches, transit or other lot owners for use of their parking at “off-time” hours
- Consider adjustments to regulations for on-street parking in the form of “preferred zone” parking. This approach provides special on-street parking privileges for certain types of users within a defined area. Establishing retail, residential, and employee parking zones within specific areas of downtown that would encourage on-street parking, based on the land use emphasis of a given area. It would also preserve on-street parking in the core shopping area for retail use.

4 Development Opportunities

Redevelopment of parcels in the Central District especially the Downtown and Pedestrian Commercial Core remains a real option for the future. Under this plan a significant amount of redevelopment can take place whenever the market demand will support further development. Projects that come forward will undoubtedly be significantly more intense than the building and uses that now occupy potential redevelopment parcels. Many of these parcels are older structures that do not represent major investments in site improvements. Market demand is the only real barrier to further development and reasonable intensification in the Central District.

The sections that follow present opportunities for development in the various sub-areas that combine to form the Central District. There are twelve of them covering both the commercial and residential dominated areas covered by this plan. Figure 11, Central District Sub-Areas, locates each sub-areas and indicates by figure number where the reader can find the individual map series that show; existing land-use, existing zoning and the planned zoning policies that will enable development opportunities.

At the time of adoption of this plan (the second quarter of 2001), there appears to be significant demand for more residential development in the form of relatively high-priced condominium. This type of development adjacent to and within the Pedestrian Commercial Core is very positive for growth in the market for other uses, as it brings more people with substantial disposable income into the immediate market area. There is, of course, a finite limit to the numbers of new units that can be added over time. Market demand cannot grow indefinitely. As a classic single-sided market, like other north shore communities, Highland Park has limitation to its retail development potential caused by its geographic location on the shore of Lake Michigan. For now, however, the Central District population is growing due to the condominium development activity of recent years. As redevelopment sites outside the Pedestrian Commercial Core are reduced in number, pressure will be brought to add such units inside the Pedestrian Commercial Core itself.

Other kinds of development that are not particularly market driven are also supported by this plan. Of particular importance is the addition of affordable housing units to assure that the community will have reasonable balance in its housing supply for families of diverse income levels. Community and cultural facilities also have a place in the Central District as they enrich the lives of all Highland Park residents.

This Plan supports such development. It will add strength to the retail and commercial activities on which a healthy downtown anywhere is dependent. It also offers the potential to greatly improve the quality of the buildings and architecture on many of the streets inside the Pedestrian Commercial Core Area. While total retail space will increase slightly perhaps, the engine to drive new and more substantial buildings can come from a strategy that encourages residential development within the core. The challenge to the City is fivefold:

1. Assure that new development has the kind of design excellence that Highland Park residents have come to appreciate and demand.

Balance the amount and scale of new, mixed-use development with the shared community value of maintaining community identity and traditions, and the familiar look of the Central District. Pacing the rate of change can help, as can advanced zoning and architect design techniques. Provisions such as the addition of story limitations to the control of building height, the requirement for peaked roof lines and the application of the ziggurat principle on signature streets will add to the City's control over what the character of new development will be in the future.

2. Manage the parking system to make the Pedestrian Commercial Core appealing and convenient to the resident, shopper and visitor.
3. Continue to encourage cultural and entertainment activities within the core area.

4. Increase the attention put into beautifying the Pedestrian Commercial Core.

All of these strategies are included in this Plan. As a package they can make healthy change and balanced growth a very positive thing for the community. Redevelopment requires intensification in all but a very few instances. The overall excellent health of the Central District allows the community to manage intensification so that it remains within acceptable scale and that what does arise is well done and adds to the community.

Suggestions regarding land use and character of development are general and should be seen as such. It is primarily each individual property owner, within the parameters of established land use regulations and community design review that primarily determines actual redevelopment of any site. Parking is the wildcard however. In most cases public/private cooperation or partnerships will be needed for other large-scale developments such as Renaissance Place. Such participation can provide much greater project control that will give the community confidence in the outcome of any such future projects.

5.2.3 Parking

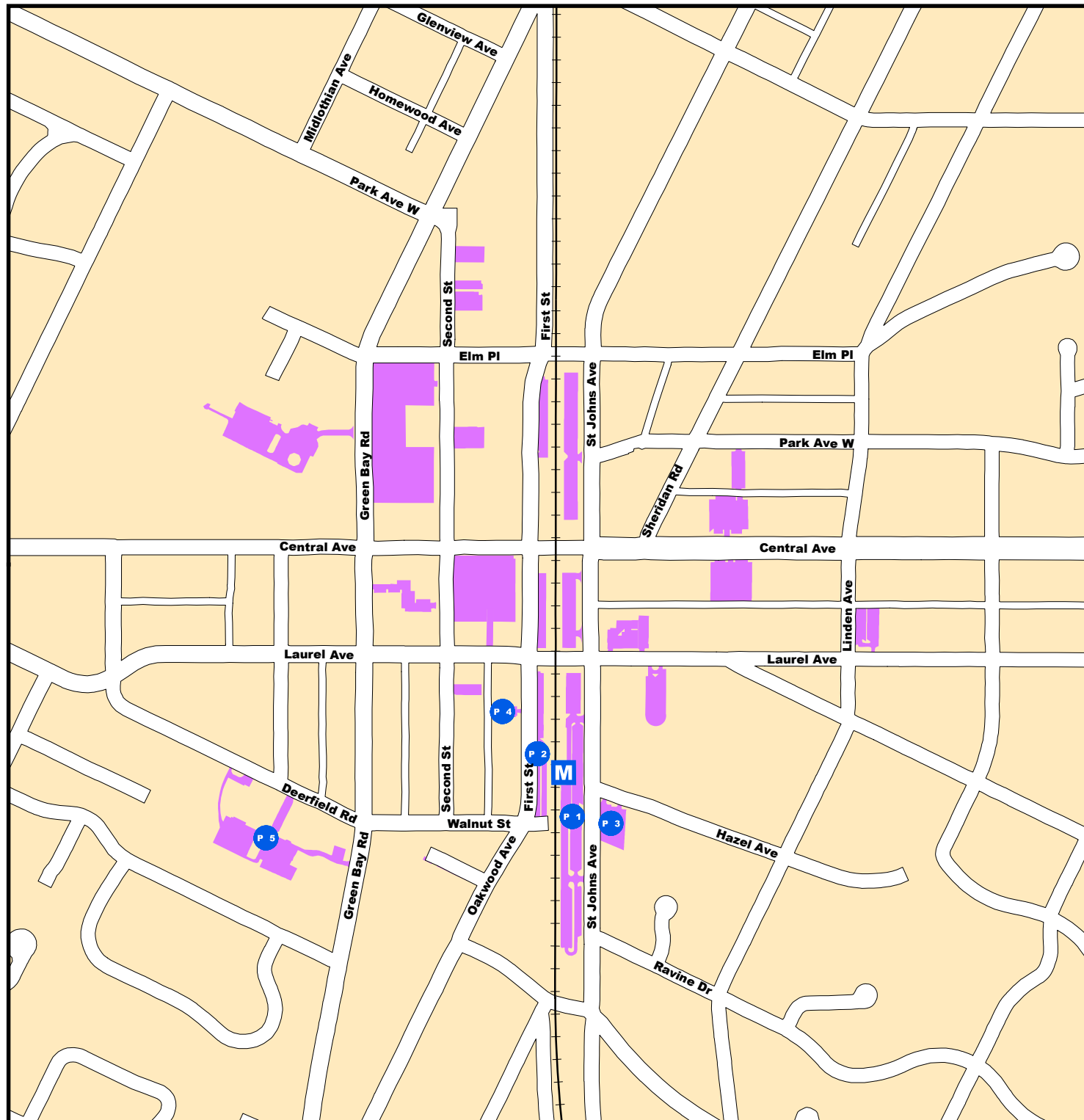
Parking Structures. Explore the possibility of converting some parking areas along the Metra train tracks from surface to structure parking. For example, adding just one level of parking to both public lots on the east side of St. Johns Avenue, straddling both sides of Central Avenue, would increase their capacity by over 200 spaces.

On-Site Parking. Consider prohibiting new developments from building on-site parking lots in front of building(s). Instead, encourage parking behind buildings when possible, or on the side when appropriate.

City of Highland Park Commuter Permit Parking

Legend

- P 1 Central Train Station East Lot
- P 2 Central Train Station West Lot
- P 3 City Hall Commuter Lot
- P 4 1716 First Street Lot
- P 5 Immaculate Conception Church Lot



Note:

Commuters may park in any "C Permit" designated space with one of the following:

- Daily Hang Tag (\$2 / day)
- C1 Quarterly Permit (\$60 per quarter)
- C3 Annual Permit (\$216 per year)

All are available for purchase from the Finance Department at City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue.

Daily Hang Tags are also sold in the vending machines located at Braeside, Ravinia, and Central Metra Train Stations. "C Permits" and Daily Hang Tags are not valid in metered spaces.



City of Highland Park

Employee and Remote Employee Permit Parking

Legend

Employee Parking

- P 1 Port Clinton Square Garage
- P 2 Central Business District Garages
- P 3 St Johns Avenue North Lot
- P 4 First Street Elm South Lot
- P 5 Ori North Lot
- P 6 Second Street Laurel South Lot
- P 7 1716 First Street Lot
- P 8 Water Tower North Lot
- P 9 Second Street Elm North Lot
- P 10 1987 Second Street Lot
- P 11 Immaculate Conception Church Lot
- P 12 LaSalle Place

Remote Employee Parking

- P 15 Presbyterian Church Parking Lot
- P 16 Immaculate Conception Church Lot
- P 17 McGovern Street
(Between Deerfield and Laurel)
- P 18 Laurel Avenue
(West of McGovern St)

Note:

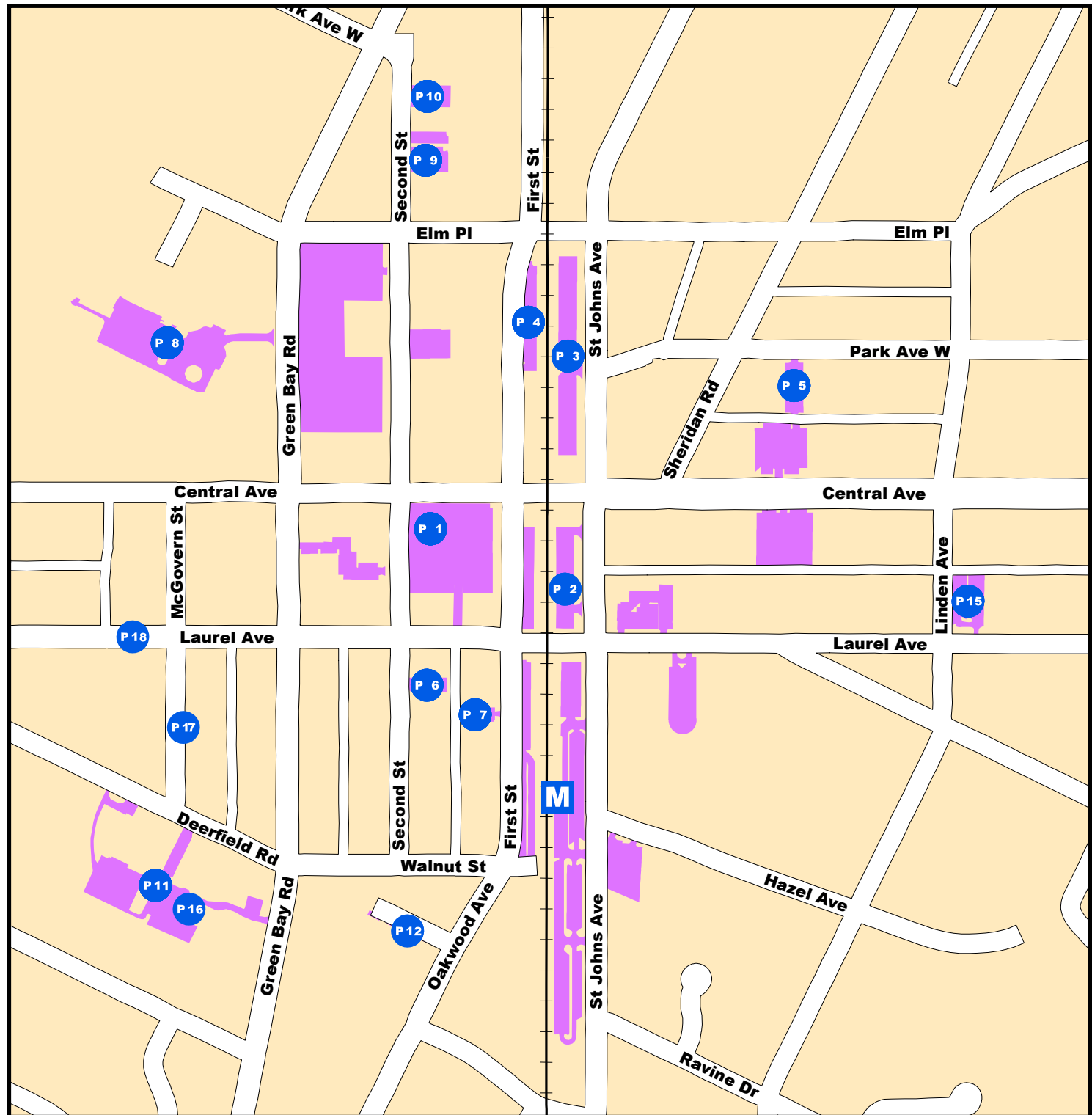
Employees may park in any "E Permit" space with one of the following:

- E1 Employee Quarterly Permit (\$60 per quarter)
- ER Employee Quarterly Permit (\$60 per quarter, Ravinia)
- E3 Employee Annual Permit (\$216 per year)
- E4 Employee Annual Permit (\$216 per year, Ravinia)

Employees may park in any "RE Permit" space with one of the following:

- RE Remote Employee Permit (\$10 per quarter)
- RE2 Remote Employee Permit (\$10 per quarter)

Permits are available for purchase from the Finance Department at City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue



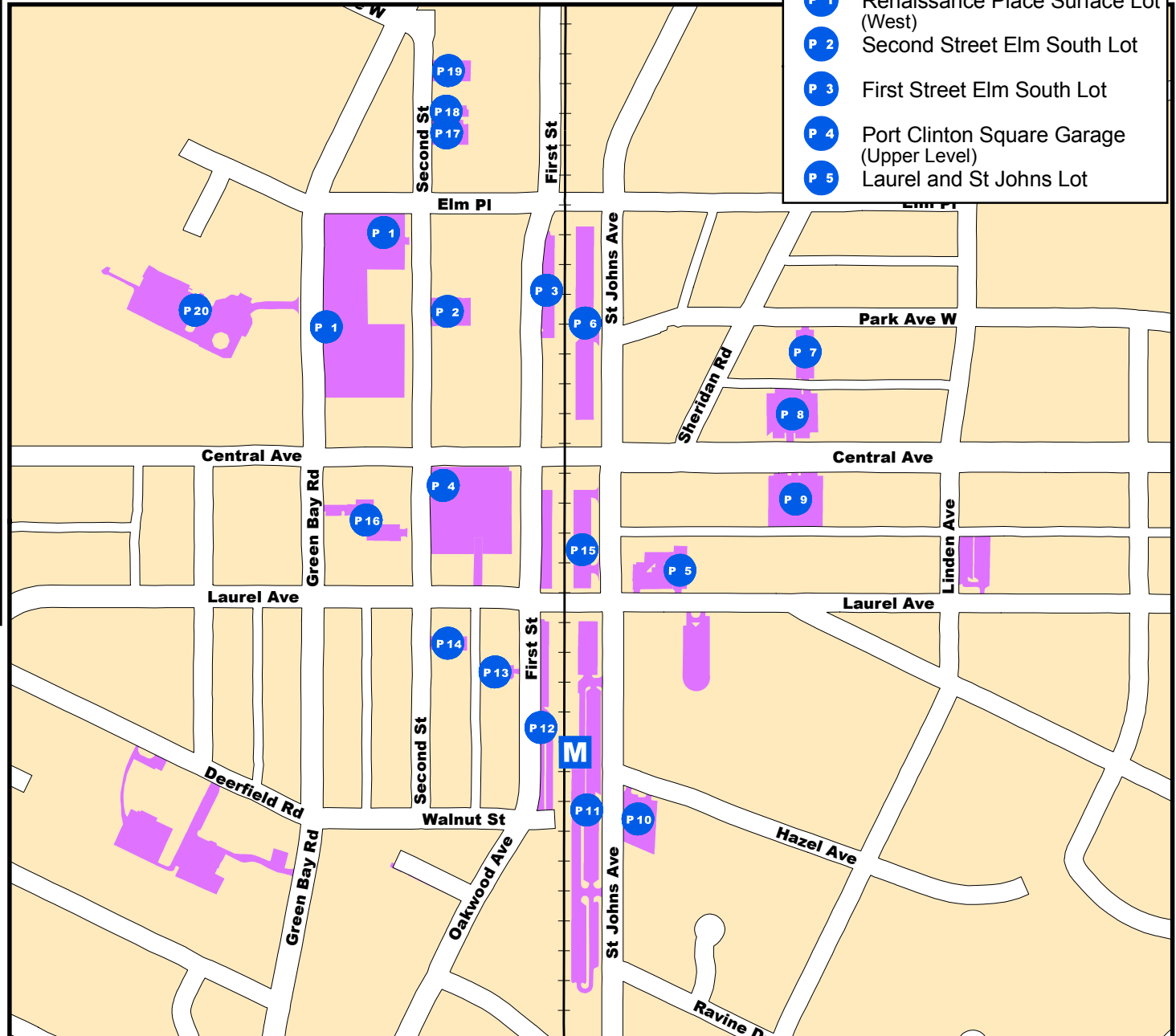
Free Parking After 5:00 PM
and Weekends and Holidays

City of Highland Park
Lots That Allow
Free Parking After 5:00 PM and on
Weekends and Holidays

Free Parking Sundays
and Holidays

- P 6** St Johns Avenue North Lot
- P 7** Ori North Lot
- P 8** Ori South Lot
- P 9** Central Avenue ES Lot
- P10** City Hall Parking Lot
- P11** Central Train Station East Lot
- P12** Central Train Station West Lot
- P13** 1716 First Street Lot
- P14** Second Street Laurel South Lot
- P15** Central Business District Garage
- P16** Second Street South Central Lot
- P17** Second Street Elm North Lot
- P18** 1963 Second Street Lot
- P19** 1987 Second Street Lot
- P20** Water Tower North Lot

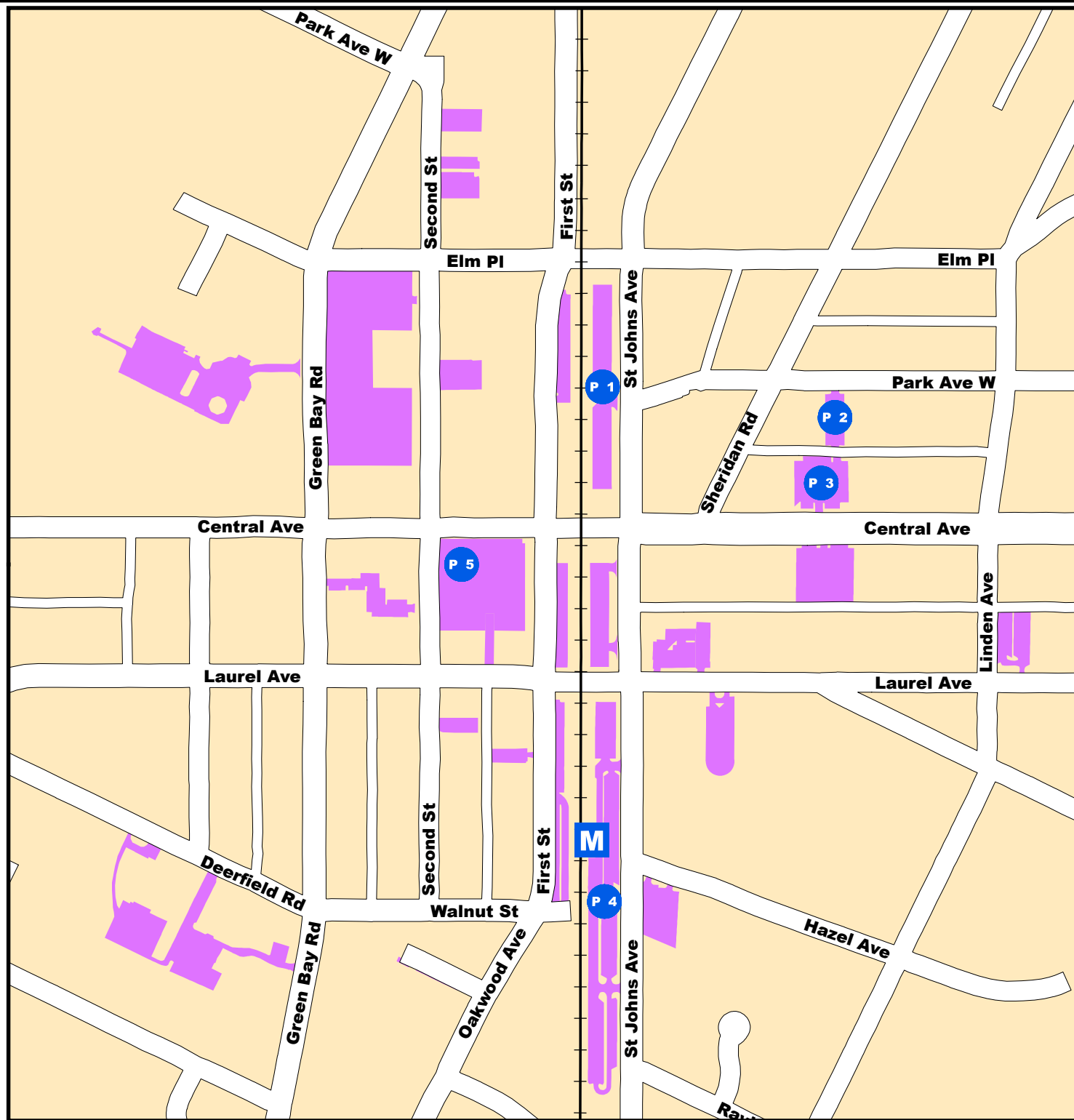
- P 1** Renaissance Place Surface Lot (Northeast)
- P 1** Renaissance Place Surface Lot (West)
- P 2** Second Street Elm South Lot
- P 3** First Street Elm South Lot
- P 4** Port Clinton Square Garage (Upper Level)
- P 5** Laurel and St Johns Lot



City of Highland Park Metered Parking Lots

Legend

- P 1 St Johns Avenue North
- P 2 Ori North Lot
- P 3 Ori South Lot
- P 4 Central Train Station East Lot
- P 5 Port Clinton Square Garage (Upper Level)
- M Metra STATION











Note:

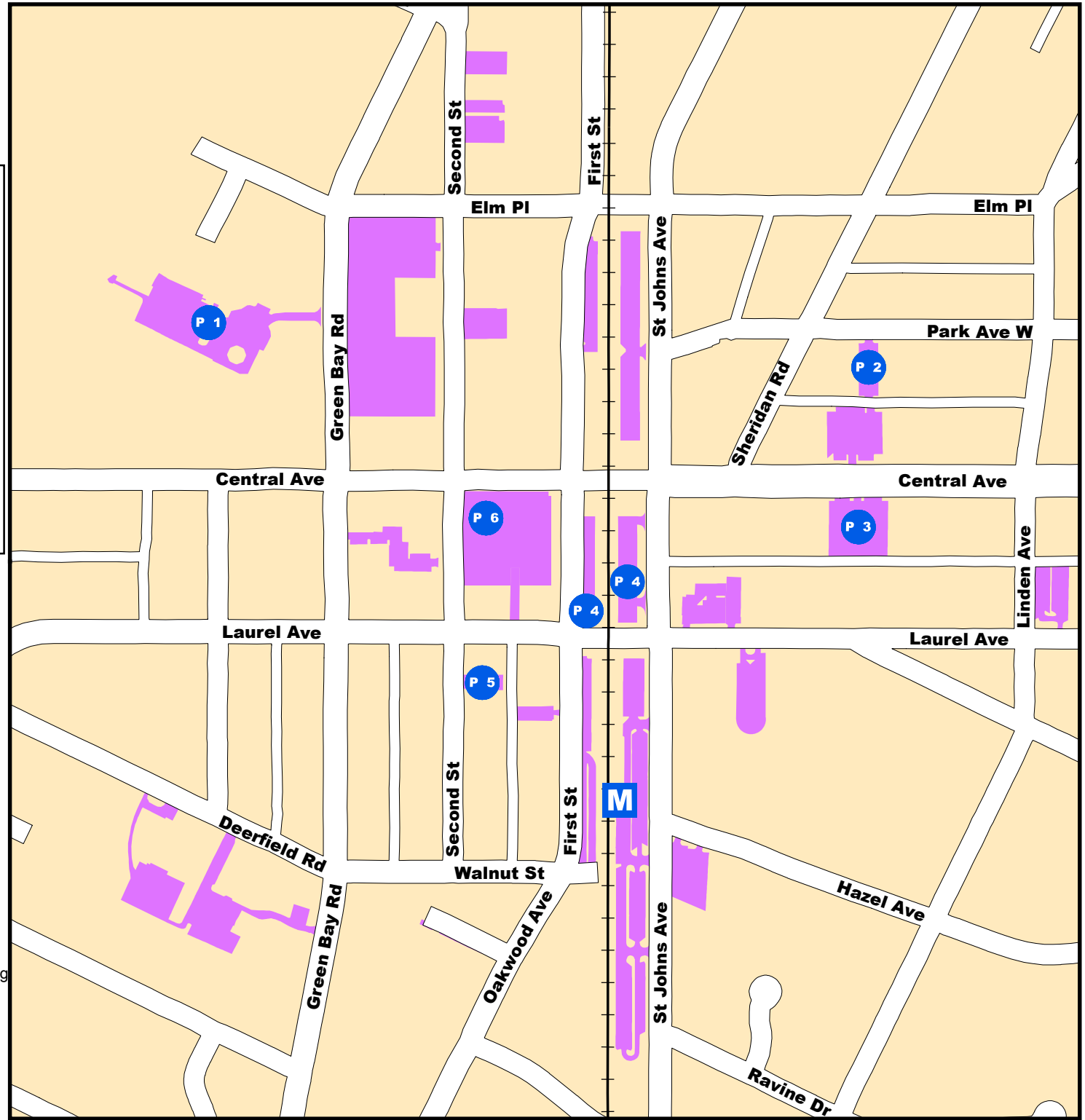
All meters cost \$ 0.25 per hour and are available up to 12 hours



City of Highland Park Overnight Parking (Permit Required)

Legend

-  Water Tower North Lot
-  Ori North Lot
-  Central Avenue ES Lot
-  Central Business District Garage (East Lower Level)
-  Central Business District Garage (West Lower Level)
-  Second Street Laurel South Lot
-  Port Clinton Square Garage (Upper Level)
-  Metra STATION



Notes:

Overnight Permits \$10.00/month Surface Lots;
\$25.00/month at Port Clinton Square and CBD
Garages for residents. \$40.00/month at
CBD Garages for non-residents

Overnight Parking is Permitted in designated lots
Between 2:00 AM and 6:00 PM With an "O" Permit

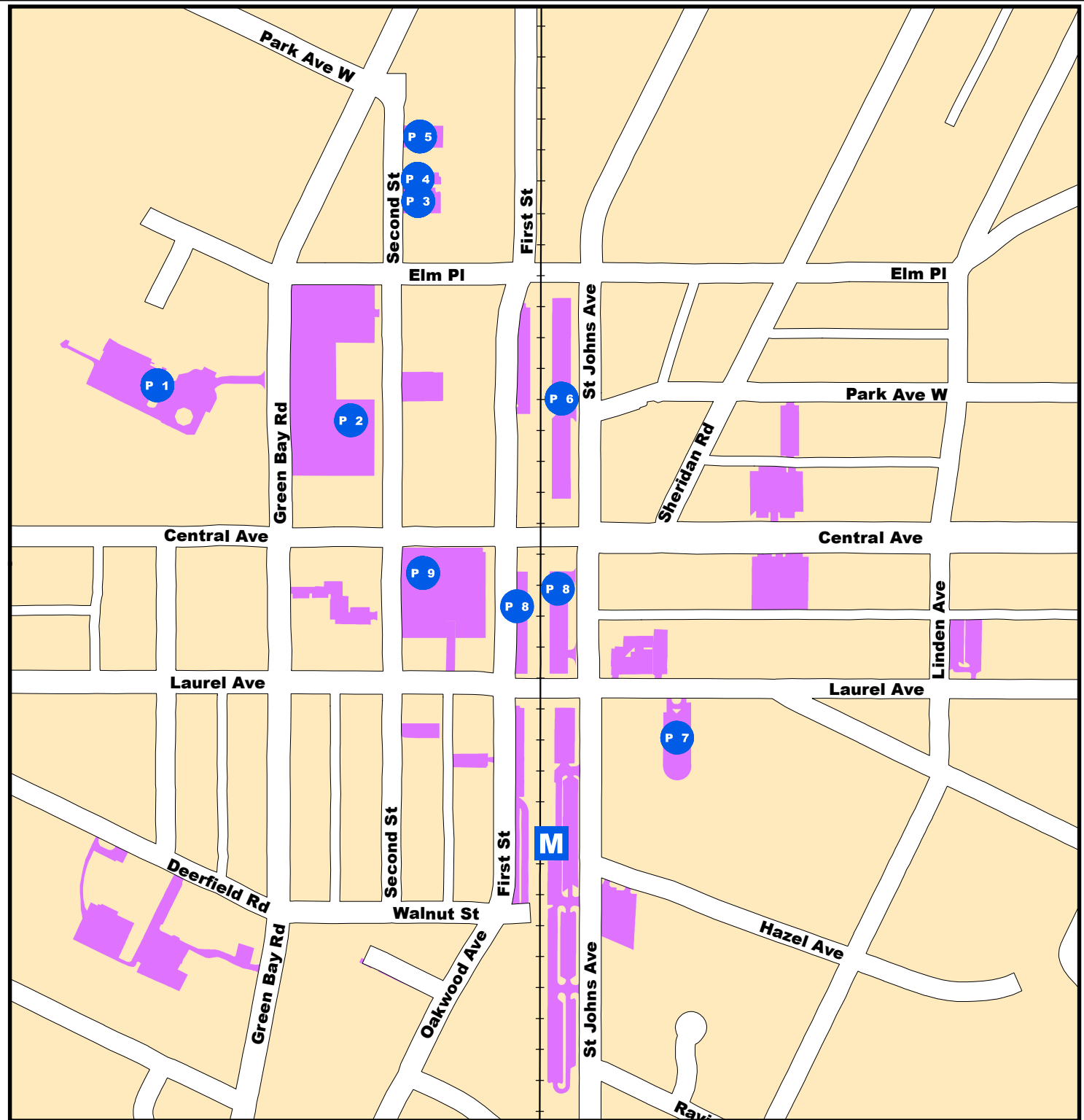
Between April 1st and November 30th Overnight Parking
is permitted at any 12-hour metered space in a City
Public Lot with an "O" Permit



City of Highland Park Lots That Allow 3-Hour Free Parking

Legend

- P 1 Water Tower North Lot
- P 2 Renaissance Place Garage
- P 4 1963 Second Street Lot
- P 3 Second Street Elm North Lot
- P 5 1987 Second Street Lot
- P 6 St Johns Avenue North Lot
- P 7 Library Parking Lot
- P 8 Central Business District Garage
- P 9 Port Clinton Square Garage (Upper Level)
- M Metra STATION



City of Highland Park Lots That Allow 2-Hour Free Parking

Legend

Parking Lot Name

- P 1 Renaissance Place Surface Lot Northeast
- P 1 Renaissance Place Surface Lot West
- P 2 Second Street Elm South Lot
- P 3 First Street Elm South Lot
- P 4 Ori South Lot
- P 5 Central Avenue ES Lot
- P 6 Laurel and St Johns Lot
- P 7 City Hall Parking Lot
- P 8 1716 First Street Lot
- P 9 Second Street Laurel South Lot
- P 10 Second Street South Central Lot
- M Metra STATION

