

COMMUNITY MINGLE

– PARKING –

FEBRUARY 20TH 6:00 PM at the CIVIC
GARDEN CLUB.

Enjoy a brief presentation from Town Staff before splitting off into small groups to discuss parking regulations around town, with a focus on 1st Street. Small groups will be given the opportunity to share the main takeaways from their discussion with the whole group at the end.

Discussion may include:

- Paid Parking on 1st St
- Closing 1st St to vehicular traffic
- Additional signage
- Transforming 1st St into a one-way street...

Along with many other ideas! Please join us and share your thoughts!

South First Street

GOAL: To establish reasonable parking needs that will strike a balance between the needs of downtown businesses and residents, shoppers and tourists, and members of the community.

Current Status

South First Street is zoned for Commercial use (which includes some upper-floor residences). It is also a part of the town's Historic Preservation District. The street is narrow, with parking allowed on both sides. This design has created challenges for both drivers and pedestrians, and often for emergency responders.

Options:

Over the past several years, several options have been discussed regarding parking and other issues on South First Street. In the past, several suggestions have been made in an effort to increase parking availability, and therefore access, to the Central Business District. Those ideas have included:

1. Add time restrictions on parking to discourage employee and business owner parking.
2. Add parking enforcement.
3. Add paid parking, both on-street and off-street.
4. Provide better advertising for existing parking.
5. Transform South First Street to one-way driving.
 - o This will add parking opportunities by creating angle parking.
 - o This may also increase traffic on other streets.
6. Close South First Street to all traffic between 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and provide a shuttle. This raises the question of who pays for the shuttle, and who staffs the shuttle?
7. Extend South First Street south to Caledonia Street, or beyond. This option will be considered as part of an area-wide plan for the properties located within the Commercial Transition zone, and would provide greater traffic flexibility.

Each of these suggestions creates the potential for impacts that would need to be addressed. For example, changing South First Street to one-way traffic, or closing the street to all traffic, could result in significant traffic increases on North First Street and on South Second Street. In addition, many of these suggestions would require the expenditure of funds that have not been budgeted.

Discussion will be limited to the issue of South First Street. Any other issue raised will be saved for discussion at a later date. After 20-30 minutes of discussion, tables will be asked to summarize the issues they discussed for the entire room to hear. Those issues will be documented by the staff for later use in preparing the town's Comprehensive Plan update.

FIGURE 7.1

DOWNTOWN PARKING SURVEY; First Street

[illegible]

Community Event Summary: Community Mingle on Parking on First Street

On February 20, 2024, La Conner's Planning Department invited community members to engage in small group discussions regarding parking on South First Street. The goal of this event was for staff to listen to community viewpoints on parking, and for community members to engage with each other on the topic of parking. Roughly 50 people attended the Community Mingle.

Planning Director Michael Davolio introduced the topic of parking on South First Street. He reminded everyone present that the goal of parking regulations and traffic flow are "To establish reasonable parking needs that will strike a balance between the needs of downtown businesses and residents, shoppers and tourists, and members of the community."

Fire Chief Aaron Reinstra shared his concerns regarding safety for First Responders on South First Street. Currently, it is difficult to access emergency calls on that street due to two-way traffic flow combined with the size of emergency vehicles, and it is difficult to secure the scene properly. This leads to increased response times on South First Street, and increased danger for both citizens and First Responders. He shared his support for a one-way traffic flow.

After the introduction, the discussion began in small groups. Discussion at most tables was led by a member of the Planning Commission. After about an hour of small group discussion, each group shared a brief summary of their conversation.

Each of the following summaries represents the opinions of the community members that made up each group.

Group 1: Group 1 shared that their conversation focused around the options of keeping South First Street two-way, one-way, or "no way" i.e., closed to cars. The options discussed included keeping the street two-way, but with parking only on one side, and making the street one way, with parallel parking on both sides. Overall, they found the idea of back-in angle parking difficult, and were not in favor of it. They note that impacts on Second Street should be considered, and that signage to parking lots could be increased along with other traffic mitigation strategies. They also suggested that First or Second Streets be closed during times of especially high traffic, as well as a shuttle service for those parking in the lots. Regardless of the decision, they suggested that a pilot program may be useful in testing the solution.

Group 2: Group 2 shared that they discussed an option for a two-way South First Street with parallel parking on one side and methods to direct cars to the satellite parking lots instead of street parking. They also suggested working with the Port to develop fee-free parking on Port-owned parking lots. This group also discussed timed street parking on First Street. This group brought up making Second Street one-way heading south, or adding a "no left turn on Second Street" sign in the Commercial St/Second Street intersection, so that cars heading east on Commercial Street from 1st First Street would not be able to turn onto Second Street. Extending Second Street to Caledonia Street was also mentioned. These options were brought up with the intention of protecting Second Street from additional traffic. Finally, this group mentioned that additional parking enforcement taking the form of a "Good-to-Go" style system may help with parking enforcement and congestion.

Group 3: This group mentioned that their conversation was similar to other groups. They reported concern with increased traffic on Second Street if First Street became one-way, and were against angle parking on First Street. They noted that paid parking on First Street would require additional

enforcement, and brought up concerns about delivery truck access for businesses as well as safety concerns regarding traffic jams for emergency response vehicles and scene control during emergencies. They suggested that a parking garage could be built beyond Calico Cupboard. Drivers seeing parking availability in the form of a garage may help mitigate concerns about traffic flow.

Group 4: This group shared that they discussed the implementation of one-way south bound on First Street between Washington Ave and Commercial Street, while maintaining a two-way street on the north end of South First Street from Morris Street to Washington Ave so access to the post office is not impeded. They recommend removing parking from the west side of the north end of South First Street, and adding a “no left turn on Second Street” sign to the Commercial Street and Second Street intersection so traffic flows past the south town parking lot to Maple Ave. They would like to see increased use of parking lots, and suggested a “hop-on, hop-off” type of shuttle service to facilitate this. They are against paid parking on First Street, as they believe it is detrimental to tourists and businesses, there is no good enforcement option, and they are not convinced that it would make money.

Group 5: Group 5 shared that they would like to see code changes to discourage residents from parking long-term on South First Street, potentially with a yearly parking pass that allows residents to park in the town parking lot for free. They are against angled parking because of issues involving sidewalk encroachment and because it looks cluttered. They suggested a one-way First Street with parallel parking on both sides, with “drop off and pick up” locations for drivers to drop off visitors with mobility challenges along First Street before continuing to the parking lots. They noted that if the traffic flow on First Street was south to north, drivers would be routed by parking lots on their way into town. They do not support paid street parking, and are curious about the feasibility of local businesses giving out information regarding parking. They would like to see additional signage for parking.

Group 6: This group shared that they were in agreement that South First Street should be one-way with parallel parking on both sides. They support additional signage directing drivers to the three main town outlets, as well as additional signage to encourage parking options. They believed that paid parking could provide a good revenue source, and suggested a shuttle or jitney from the parking lots. They suggested that residents could have special passes allowing free parking in the parking lots so they could park and take the shuttle. They stated that the cost of the shuttle/jitney could be off-set by providing opportunities for advertising on the sides of the vehicle. They emphasized that a shuttle service in La Conner has been asked for repeatedly.

Group 7: Group 7 suggested that South First Street become pedestrian only from Washington Ave to Commercial Street. They mention this would need a shuttle/jitney to be effective. If not, this group supports one-way from Washington Ave to Commercial Street with parallel parking on both sides. They are against angled parking. They believe there should be no left turns allowed onto Second Street from Commercial Street, and mentioned that traffic should also not be directed to Third Street, and that the sharp curve at the top of Commercial Street could be dangerous. They would like the area directly around the post office to remain the same.

In addition to group summaries, there were also scattered comments made by community members which included the following:

- Creation of a “safe parking zone” for those who live in vehicles;

- Acknowledgement of the fact that the majority of the town is residential, and not only Second Street;
- The fact that the Benton Street Stairs direct people from Second Street down to First Street.

Moving forward, staff will use the feedback received from the community during this event to help inform choices regarding South First Street. We intend to bring this issue back before the Planning Commission in the near future, and then bring their comments and recommendations to the Town Council soon thereafter. Community members will get more opportunities to comment on South First Street at future times. We are actively seeking other methods to secure community input.

We encourage people to subscribe to “Notify Me” on the Town’s website for notifications about the upcoming agenda for Planning Commission meetings.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Staff
SUBJECT: South First Street options
DATE: February 28, 2024

The February 20th Community Mingle sparked a wide-ranging public discussion about possible changes to South First Street. As noted by Fire Chief Aaron Reinstra, the importance of public safety and the accessibility for first responders are important aspects to the discussion, and to proposed solutions. And as noted, many of these issues have been the subject of public discussions for more than twenty years. With the amount of public input that the town is now continuing to receive, it is hoped that the public's interest will lead to action. This memorandum is intended to provide some depth to the Community Mingle event summary to you have previously received.

The first item for discussion is the nature of vehicular traffic on South First Street. The current two-way traffic is largely viewed as potentially hazardous. Should two-way traffic be retained, or should it be changed to one-way? Or should all vehicular traffic on South First Street be prohibited?

One group has proposed keeping South First Street open to two-way traffic, but removing parking from one side of the street. While this may be a workable option from a traffic safety perspective, the removal of half of the available parking would likely have a significant negative impact on local businesses.

Others suggested making South First Street one-way, but only from Washington Avenue to Douglas Street, in order to maintain access to the post office. However, this approach may limit the efficacy of public safety.

There was some discussion of ways to promote the availability of the parking lots on Third Street and South Basin Street (owned by the Port of Skagit County). That discussion included recommendations for better signage, and the feasibility of implementing a shuttle service.

With one-way travel, there was some discussion of increasing parking by converting parking on one side of the street to diagonal parking. That discussion led to concerns that such a parking design may reduce safety, as well as look aesthetically cluttered.

The suggestion of eliminating vehicular travel on South First Street included references to other tourist-based communities that have had success with this concept. Although this idea did not generate significant support at the mingle, the Town has since received several letters that contained favorable attitudes towards implementation of a pedestrian only South First Street, at least part of the year.

Virtually every discussion of one-way traffic on South First Street led to concerns about the impact that such a conversion could have on the residents of South Second Street. There was particular concern that one-way traffic on South First Street could lead to also creating one-way

traffic on South Second Street. There is no public support for that concept. A proposed solution was made to prohibit left turns from Commercial Street to South Second Street, with the idea being that travelers on South First Street would then not impact South Second Street.

There was also some concern expressed that the lack of parking regulations has led to abuses of long-term parking on South First Street. A suggested solution was made to prohibit (and enforce) overnight parking on South First Street, with exceptions granted for residents who would need to obtain parking permits.

There was little support for the idea of paid parking on South First Street.

Although we are still welcoming additional comments on this subject, the staff offers the following *preliminary* suggestions for further discussion:

- Begin preparations for the conversion of South First Street to one-way traffic;
- Maintain the current parallel parking design, without the use of angle parking;
- Prepare for the installation of signs on Commercial Street to prohibit left turns onto South Second Street;
- Seek information from the Public Works Department related to the cost of preparing and installing the needed signage;
- Move forward with the concept of an area-wide plan for the properties within the current Commercial Transition zone, which would include the extension of South First Street to Caledonia Street.
- Seek information from potential external partners, such as Skagit Valley Transit, about the feasibility of implementing a trolley service between parking lots.
- Recommend approval of a Town Council ordinance or resolution to limit overnight parking on South First Street.
- Develop a timetable to implement the above by October 1, 2024.

As always, we are available to answer any questions that you may have.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Staff
SUBJECT: South First Street Options
DATE: April 30, 2024

As part of the 2025 update to the Transportation Element of the town's Comprehensive Plan, the staff has included a focus on South First Street. Over the course of the past several months, we have made an effort to actively engage members of the community in our discussions on this subject. Our efforts have included community residents, business owners, tourists, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Port District. Our approaches have included discussions at Planning Commission and Town Council meetings; postings on the town's web site; one-on-one discussions with business owners, employees, and others; hosting a Community Mingle; and distributing a community survey on the subject.

In an effort to gather data, the staff has conducted a parking survey that included South First Street. We have also gathered Level of Service (LOS) data from 2020, and we have reviewed the Comprehensive Planning and Parking Study that was prepared by Gibson Traffic Consultants in 1989.

The attached survey results are the most recent communication effort. These results also appear to be consistent with comments received during the Community Mingle, and responses to materials that have been posted on the town's web site. The issues raised for consideration include the following, which are not presented in any particular order:

- public safety and fire access;
- pedestrian safety;
- impacts to businesses and residents;
- impacts to access for the disabled;
- the disruption of existing traffic patterns and volumes throughout town other than First and Second streets;
- parking impacts on all neighboring streets and in parking lots;
- the cost of making physical changes;
- impacts on accessing the post office;
- implementing paid parking;
- adding time restrictions for parking;
- the extension of South First Street to Caledonia Street;
- impacts to attractions such as the museums;
- the ability to maintain the bus route; and
- enforcement costs.

Public comments from the Fire Chief, which are supported by a large number of citizens, would indicate the public safety and fire access should be the top priority. The current two-way traffic pattern on South First Street would appear to be inconsistent with the need for better public safety and fire access. With this in mind, the staff's first recommendation is to limit South First Street to one-way traffic in a south-bound direction.

If South First Street becomes a one-way street, the next obvious question relates to parking. While several suggestions have been offered, the option with the most public support is to allow parallel parking on both sides of the street. The staff supports this option, as it continues the number of existing parking spots available for residents and tourists. However, several people have argued that parking could be improved if business owners and employees would not park in front of their places of business.

Another comment heard was, “do nothing.” The argument has been made that the town has attempted changes before, and has subsequently abandoned them. Responses to this argument often note that the size of motor vehicles today has measurably increased since the time that the 1989 Traffic and Parking Study was completed.

A few months ago, the town heard a presentation from a representative of a company that would provide a paid parking option on South First Street. There have been several arguments made on both sides of this issue, including the likelihood that paid on-street parking would provide more incentive for the use of the town’s parking lot on Third Street, if that becomes a free parking lot. It is the staff’s opinion that this subject is worthy of further discussion, but that the conversion of South First Street to one-way traffic is a separate issue that does not need to rely on a decision regarding paid parking. Similarly, decisions regarding time restrictions for parking on South First Street, while worthy of further discussion, do not necessarily need to happen concurrently with creating one-way traffic.

Another suggestion that received little public support was to eliminate all traffic on South First Street, and make it a pedestrian-only area. The staff has raised this issue with some local businesses, who expressed concern that restricting vehicular access would also restrict access by their customers.

Another area of concern is the impact of increased traffic on South Second Street if South First Street becomes one-way. One likely solution may be to restrict left-turn access from Commercial Street onto South Second Street, but that solution may have impacts on public buildings and museums located on South Second Street.

The town is in the process of advertising for a consultant to assist in developing an area-wide plan for the Transitional Commercial zone. That plan will include an analysis of the feasibility of creating an extension of South First Street to connect to Caledonia Street. Any decision on that option can wait until the study is completed, which may not happen until early 2025.

If South First Street is to become a one-way street, some of the outstanding issues are related to cost and timing. An approximate cost estimate for signage from the Public Works Director was \$3,000.00, which he deems as “not significant.” As for timing, the staff suggests creating an implementation plan that would put the first changes in place by October, 2024. Any further changes, such as time restrictions and paid parking, can be discussed and/or implemented at a later date. By making this change during the later months of the year, the town will have a chance to get used to the change before the 2025 Tulip Season.

AM Peak-Hour Intersection LOS Summary							
Int #	Location	Intersection Control	Direction	Off-Peak Season		Seasonal Adjustment (+35% Off Peak)	
				Existing LOS	2030 LOS	Existing LOS	2030 LOS**
3	Whatcom Street @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Northbound	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.7 sec	B, 10 sec	B, 10.4 sec
			Southbound	B, 10.6 sec	B, 11.1 sec	B, 11.5 sec	B, 12.3 sec
4	6th Street @ Morris Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	B, 11.6 sec	B, 14.1 sec	C, 18.9 sec	D, 25.9 sec
5	Maple Avenue @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	B, 12.3 sec	B, 13.8 sec	C, 15.9 sec	C, 20.4 sec
			Northbound	A, 9.1 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.6 sec
6	6th Street @ Road Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Southbound	A, 9 sec	A, 9.2 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.3 sec
7	Maple Avenue @ Road Street*	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Westbound (Driveway)	C, 17.9 sec	C, 21.8 sec	D, 26.8 sec	E, 57 sec

*Minor approach delay with 5 assumed trips. No minor-leg volume was recorded during peak-hour count

**Minimum PHF of 0.75 for future conditions

PM Peak-Hour Intersection LOS Summary - 1st/2nd Street Couplet									
Int #	Location	Intersection Control	Direction	Off-Peak Season			Seasonal Adjustment (+35% Off Peak)		
				2019 Existing	2030 Baseline	2030 w/ One-Way Couplet	2019 Existing	2030 Baseline	2030 w/ One-Way Couplet
				LOS	LOS	LOS	LOS	LOS	LOS
1	1st Street @ Morris Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.2 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.6 sec	A, 7.5 sec	A, 7.6 sec	A, 7.8 sec
2	2nd Street @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Northbound	A, 9.1 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 8.9 sec	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.7 sec	A, 9.2 sec
			Southbound	A, 9.9 sec	B, 10.2 sec	A, 9.5 sec	B, 10.4 sec	B, 10.8 sec	A, 9.9 sec
8	1st Street @ Washington Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.6 sec	B, 10.1 sec	A, 9.9 sec	B, 10.1 sec	B, 10.5 sec
			Westbound	A, 8.8 sec	A, 8.9 sec	A, 9.9 sec	A, 8.9 sec	A, 9 sec	B, 10.5 sec
9	2nd Street @ Washington Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	A, 9.2 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.9 sec	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.5 sec	B, 10.4 sec
			Westbound	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.8 sec	A, 9.6 sec	A, 9.7 sec	B, 10.2 sec
10	2nd Street @ Douglas Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.5 sec	A, 7.4 sec	A, 7.5 sec	A, 7.8 sec
12	3rd Avenue @ Caledonia Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.2 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.4 sec	A, 7.5 sec	A, 7.5 sec
14	1st Street @ Caledonia Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Southbound	-	-	A, 8.6 sec	-	-	A, 8.6 sec

PM Peak-Hour Intersection LOS Summary - Maple/Morris Intersection							
Int #	Location	Intersection Control	Direction	Off-Peak Season		Seasonal Adjustment (+35% Off Peak)	
				Existing LOS	2030 LOS	Existing LOS	2030 LOS*
5	Maple Avenue @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Intersection Avg	B, 11.5 sec	B, 12.8 sec	B, 14.9 sec	C, 21.6 sec
			Eastbound	B, 13.3 sec	C, 15.6 sec	C, 19.3 sec	D, 31.2 sec
			Northbound	A, 9.2 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.7 sec
			Westbound	A, 0 sec	A, 0 sec	A, 0 sec	A, 0 sec
		All-Way Stop Controlled	Intersection Avg	-	B, 11.5 sec	-	C, 18.4 sec
			Eastbound	-	B, 12.1 sec	-	C, 21.4 sec
			Northbound	-	B, 10.4 sec	-	B, 14.6 sec
			Westbound	-	B, 11.7 sec	-	C, 17.9 sec
		Single-Lane Roundabout	Intersection Avg	-	A, 7.2 sec	-	A, 8 sec
			Eastbound	-	A, 7.5 sec	-	A, 9.2 sec
			Northbound	-	A, 7.5 sec	-	A, 8.4 sec
			Westbound	-	A, 6.9 sec	-	A, 7.1 sec

*Minimum PHF of 0.75 for future conditions

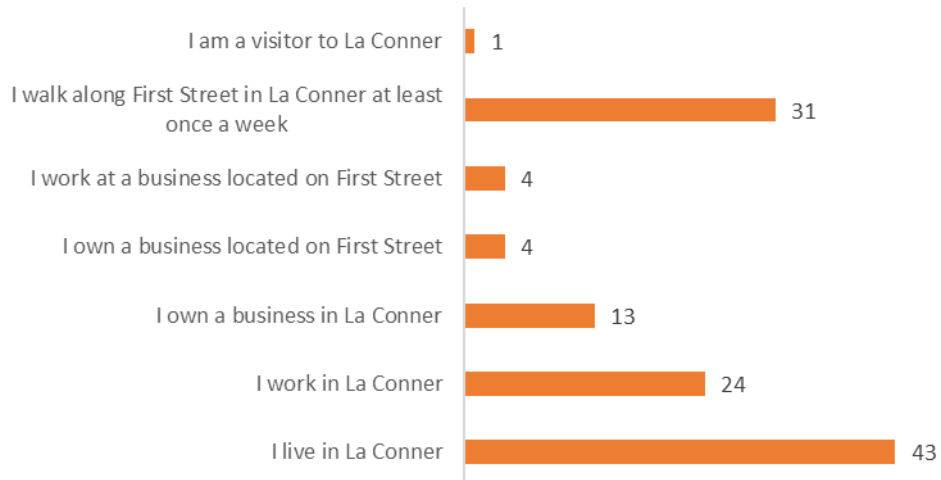
PM Peak-Hour Intersection LOS Summary							
Int #	Location	Intersection Control	Direction	Off-Peak Season		Seasonal Adjustment (+35% Off Peak)	
				Existing LOS	2030 LOS	Existing LOS	2030 LOS*
1	1st Street @ Morris Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.2 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.5 sec	A, 7.6 sec
2	2nd Street @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Northbound	A, 9.1 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.7 sec
			Southbound	A, 9.9 sec	B, 10.2 sec	B, 10.4 sec	B, 10.8 sec
3	Whatcom Street @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Northbound	B, 10.4 sec	B, 10.9 sec	B, 11.5 sec	B, 12.4 sec
			Southbound	B, 10.9 sec	B, 11.6 sec	B, 12 sec	B, 12.9 sec
4	6th Street @ Morris Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 9 sec	A, 9.7 sec	B, 10.5 sec	B, 12.1 sec
5	Maple Avenue @ Morris Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	B, 13.3 sec	C, 15.6 sec	C, 19.3 sec	D, 31.2 sec
			Northbound	A, 9.2 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.7 sec
6	6th Street @ Road Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Southbound	A, 8.6 sec	A, 8.7 sec	A, 8.8 sec	A, 8.8 sec
7	Maple Avenue @ Road Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Westbound (Driveway)	B, 13 sec	B, 14.3 sec	C, 15.8 sec	C, 18.5 sec
8	1st Street @ Washington Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.6 sec	A, 9.9 sec	B, 10.1 sec
			Westbound	A, 8.8 sec	A, 8.9 sec	A, 8.9 sec	A, 9 sec
9	2nd Street @ Washington Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	A, 9.2 sec	A, 9.3 sec	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.5 sec
			Westbound	A, 9.4 sec	A, 9.5 sec	A, 9.6 sec	A, 9.7 sec
10	2nd Street @ Douglas Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.4 sec	A, 7.5 sec
11	Maple Avenue @ Hill Street	Minor-Leg Stop-Control	Eastbound	B, 12.4 sec	B, 13.6 sec	B, 14.9 sec	C, 17.1 sec
12	3rd Avenue @ Caledonia Street	All-Way Stop-Control	Int. Average	A, 7.2 sec	A, 7.3 sec	A, 7.4 sec	A, 7.5 sec

*Minimum PHF of 0.75 for future conditions

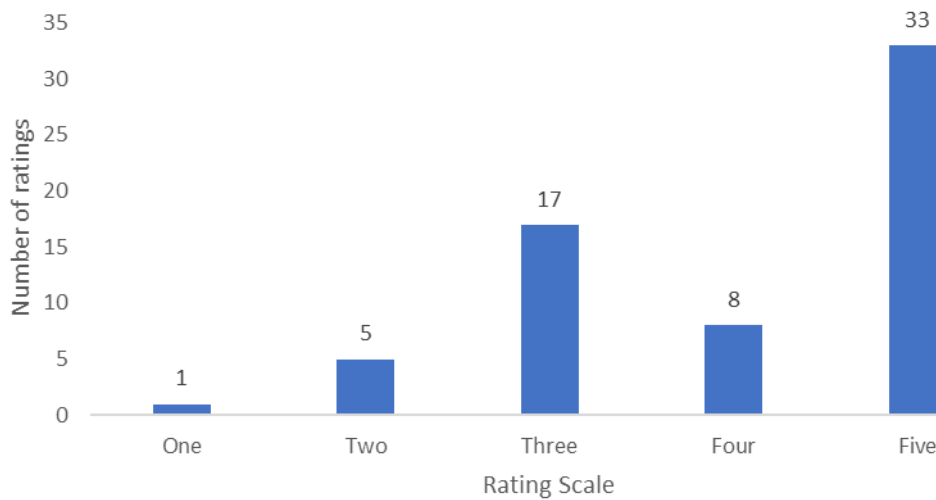
2024 First Street Survey: Results

Comments submitted with the survey appear unedited.

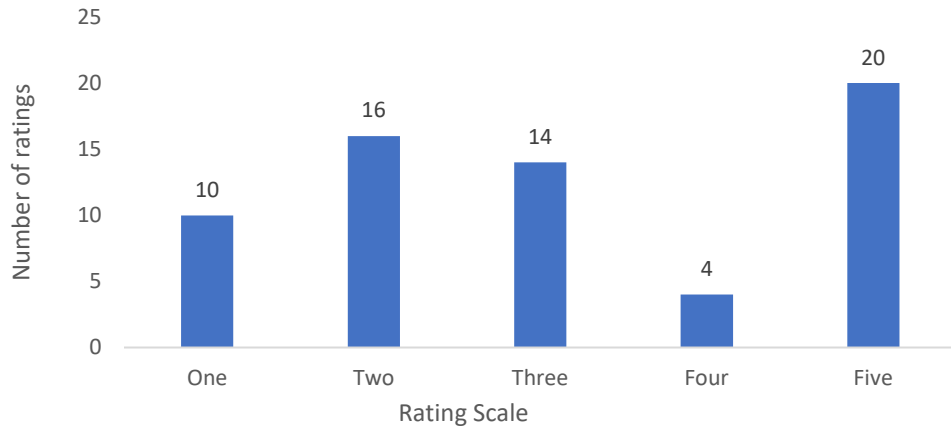
Please indicate if the below criteria applies to you



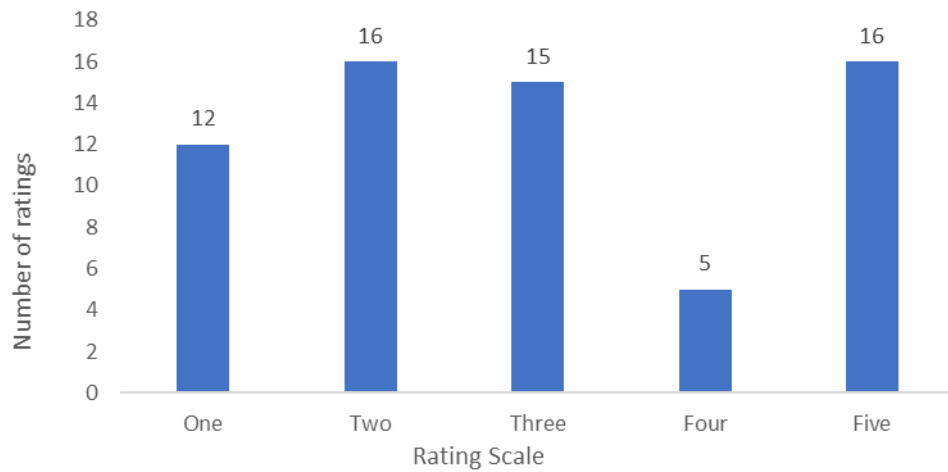
Rate your satisfaction with current pedestrian access on South First Street on a scale of one to five



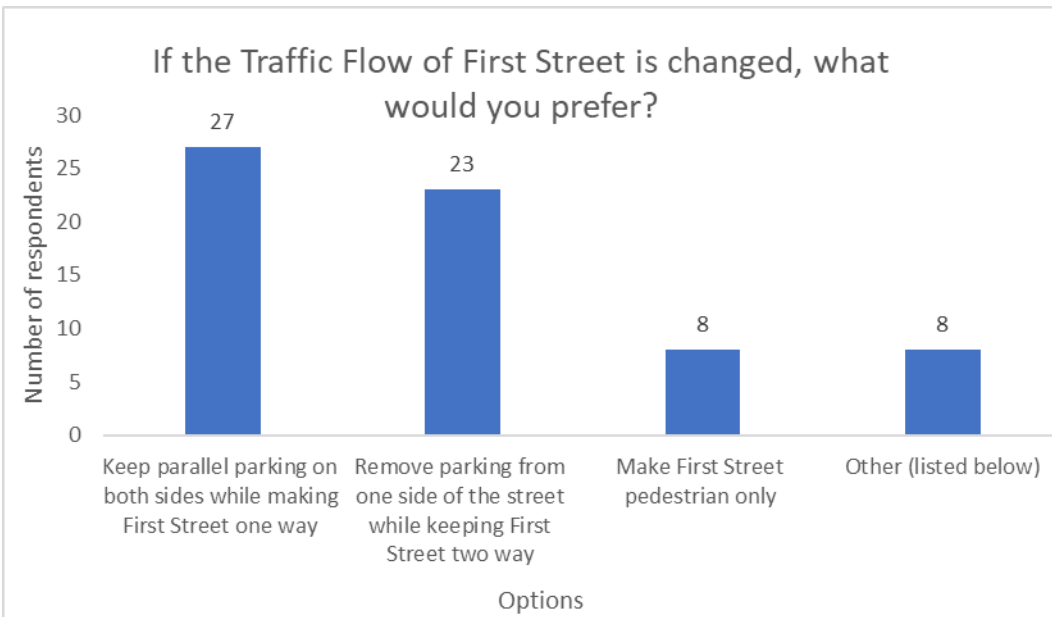
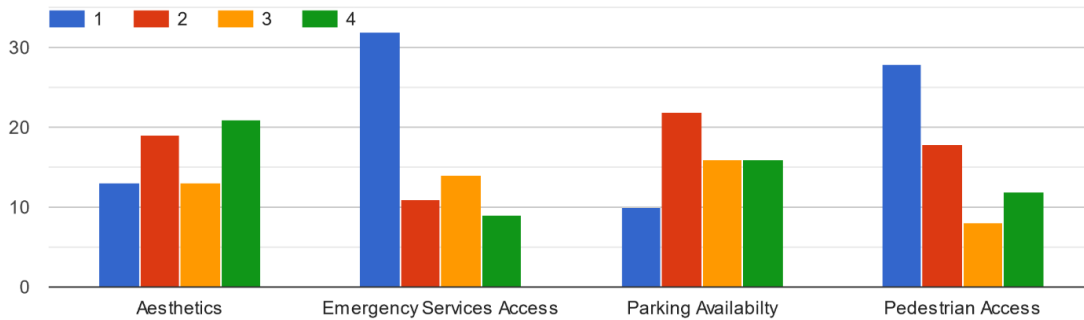
Rate your satisfaction with current traffic flow on
South First Street on a scale of one to five



Rate your satisfaction with current parking options
on South First Street on a scale of one to five



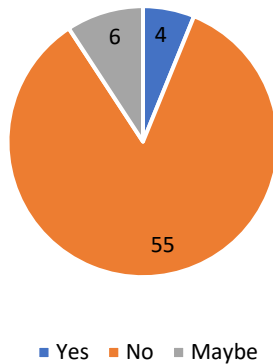
4. Please rate the following in order of importance to you in regards to South First Street, with 1 being most important and 4 being least important:



Other:

- If we do only one way not left allowed by post office
- remove auto parking on at least one side to create a designated and enforced fire lane.
- Keep two-way; parallel parking on one side; not angled--trucks + hitches will encroach on sidewalk
- Keep it as is or make the flow away from Second Street
- Keep the current parking and traffic flow configuration. The Fire Department can adapt to the challenges rather than changing the whole parking and traffic flow in downtown La Conner.
- no changes
- One way. Angle parking on one side
- keep as is

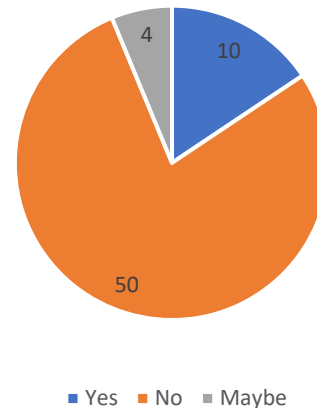
Would it affect your answer to the above question if left turns onto Second Street from Commercial Street were prohibited?



Other Comments:

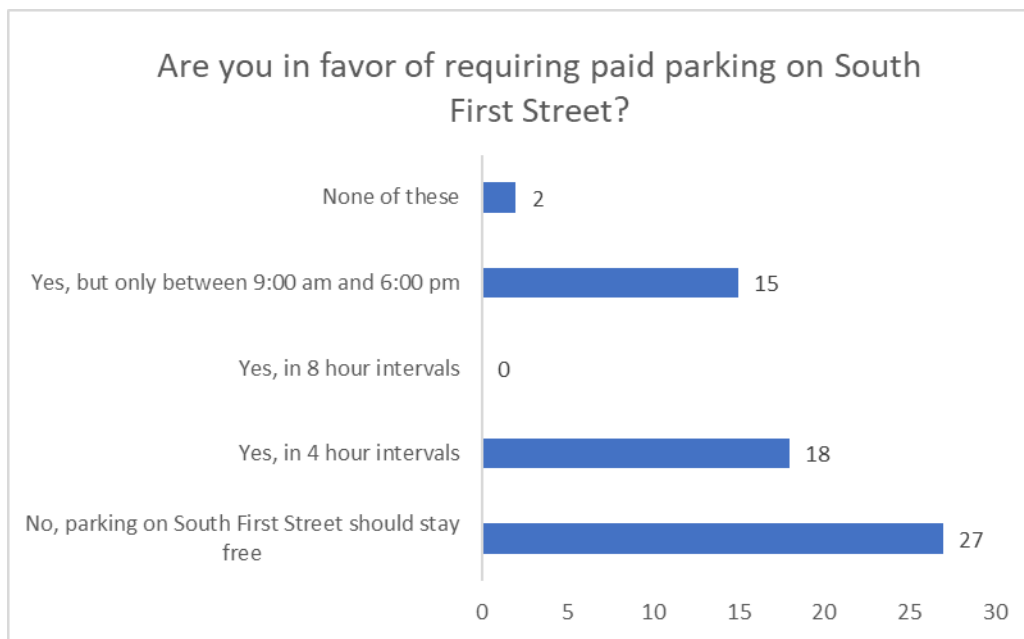
- Depends what else they would do.
- Often times you have to find parking on Second after finding none on First.
- Do not divert traffic/shift the parking problem to S. Second or S. Third St. A sign is not enough without enforcement. Cars and large trucks speed on S. Second St. already.
- There could be changes if it did not impact parking, residents and noise on Second St. People already drive too fast up the hill. It endangers children and families. I've picked up two cats hit by speeding cars on Second.
- I would not like more traffic on 2nd Street.
- Second street is not wide enough to accommodate

Would it affect your answer to the above question if South First Street was extended to Caledonia Street?



Other Comments:

- too much traffic through residential area
- It would provide more options
- Parking lot space could be added
- I would like it less
- this would retain the commercial district as commercial.
- preserved commercial zone
- preserve commercial zoning
- I like the idea of more parking available all the way to Caledonia. It is needed.
- There would be more room to turn around, but it would need a shorter route back to Morris St or they will leave
- Traffic could enter/exit town more easily and safely.
- If the traffic flow stayed down in the business area and to the parking area that may work.
- take most cars off residential streets
- Gives more options for parking and traffic flow



Other comments submitted for this question:

- Use a parking disc with the time you park, left on car. This is the law in Germany for parking! It is called a Parkscheibe. You can print your own online.
- Prohibit bail owner parking
- for tourists not locals
- Auto owners can pre-pay for their time with credit card.
- Time limit and enforcement.
- Targeted days and times throughout the week depending on the month.
- Tourists expect to pay for parking. Need special arrangement for residents of S. First St. and delivery trucks.

Please share any other thoughts you have on South First Street below:

- One-way from Morris to Commercial. Paid parking on First Street. Make parking lots free.
- It would help if there were a map illustrating your options. Hard to visualize what you're going for.
- It's been discussed so many times, it's like beating a dead horse into the ground. Either make it paid parking every 4 hours and enforce it, or make it one way. Either way, do something! Stop all the store owners and their employees and the people who rent apartments above from parking on 1st! It's aggravating to watch store owners and

employees parking on the street. I see it every single day! It's ridiculous. Tourists support the economy, make them feel welcome with a decent place to park.

- Pedestrian safety and enjoyment should be highest priority. No parking on street, one side parking, or pedestrian only, would be great aesthetically if other nearby parking on side streets could be arranged.
- One way traffic would be a good option for town. People come in by the monument go around thru town and out.
- Paid angle parking in town with free parking lot South of town
- This is a very challenging issue that needs to be addressed. I really don't think requiring visitors to pay for parking is going to impact tourism. I do think preference should be to minimize impact to residents. Perhaps signs on second street, residential parking only. And perhaps a sticker on the car indicating a resident.
- Reduce speed limit on S 1st to 15mph
- Keep loading/ unloading only areas intermittent along west 1st st. Keep fire hydrant areas NO PARKING per law. Designate paid parking for a limited amount of space on the west side for handicap. Study traffic volumes north and south. The concept is to allow oncoming traffic a bit of room to pass one another so southbound traffic can pull to the right in the unoccupied gaps opposite designated parking on the north bound side. 37 spots currently on the west side Has Fire dept inventoried the buildings that have sprinkler systems? And proper smoke detection devices annually or bi-annually ? The foundations of a number of the overwater buildings my have creosote treated wood preservative that is flammable and this material should be inventoried. Perhaps a rating system regarding greatest potential for fire, ie. Restaurants, wiring, etc etc. also incorporate the moorage stations with the parking stations. There are 77 parking spots on Nth 2nd, at the Port, and options for more. Maybe also make Nth 1stSt 2 way to the Swinomish Y club, to public parking at the port. Thank you.
- NO PAY PARKING. As a business owner the last we want is to discourage patrons.
- Planning including reduced use of vehicle fossil fuels needs to be an essential component of this.
- Our fire fighters are volunteers. Thank you! We should provide them further training and support to help them direct traffic during an emergency. Traffic revisions would not be necessary if traffic could be confidently directed to ensure safety and health concerns.
- They should not prohibit left hand turns by maple hall to 2nd street. If you make it one way don't make it both ways by the post office
- more access for emergency vehicles
- work good as is
- The town should have waterslides from 2nd street to 1st street
- Should be 1 way southbound.
- More visible signage to parking options at critical intersections. At intersection of Morris and Third and First, at the Stop sign, and at Commercial and S Second. If eliminating parking, which should be on the west side of S First, put diagonal parking on N First and add a bike lane on S First.

- Eliminate parking on the west side of S First and add a bike lane. Get the retail owners and employees to park in the Town lot with free permit or in public parking off S First. Add better signage showing rate and direction to Town and Port parking lots at the intersections of Morris at 3rd and 1st streets, and at Commercial and 2nd. Add diagonal parking on the east side of Morris and N First.
- Small town--be European and go pedestrian only--IT WORKS. Reserved parking for residents before and after Pedestrian closing. Former business owner.
- A walking downtown is the future. It is an 850 feet (260 m) walk from Washington St. to Commercial St. on 1st St. Tourists already walk this street's wide sidewalks. If the street is closed to vehicles, pedestrians would feel and be much safer without fear of motor traffic. The Port of Skagit operate an electric "sightseeing" bus conveying tourists now from the marina. These trips can be extended to the South parking lot with an additional bus & driver. The town would be distinctive for being the only town with a walkable main street. The shuttle would only need to operate from April to September. South 1st St. would operate as a one-way street going south during the Winter. Parking on one side would be available.
- It's a beautiful spot. Give pedestrians priority/safety. To encourage use of parking lot below City Hall, make a pedestrian-friendly path from parking lot to Channel (if need be, along Caledonia St.). Then no need to go uphill from parking lot; more scenic walk along Channel to town/to the park below Rainbow Bridge. During tulip season, water taxi from the parking lot path to north end of town and back.
- This town should remain friendly to the community. Paid parking is a terrible idea for residents. We frequent shops and restaurants. Did we learn nothing from the pandemic? When we can't count on visitors, this town fails. It needs to always consider community first.
- This is a very serious change and should be very seriously considered.
- Extend South First Street to Caledonia. Make the parking lots to the north and south of town free instead of paid parking. Make free parking in those lots an incentive for visitors and employees in town to park there, receiving some congestion on First Street. Implementing paid parking or time limits on First will require enforcement with will decrease the charm of La Conner. There will be unintended consequences if the traffic and parking is changed on First Street which will impact traffic adversely on Second and Third Streets.
- Expand pull outs for emergency n delivery use. Charge for First Sat make Caledonia lot free as incentive to use. Do not divert traffic to Second Street.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: Planning Staff
SUBJECT: Continuing South First Street discussion
DATE: May 9, 2024

On May 7th, the Planning Commission meeting included a discussion of traffic and parking issues on South First Street. This discussion is based primarily on the information and staff recommendations contained in the attached memorandum. This material is based on public comments received in a recent survey, plus preferences noted in a recent Community Mingle and other public comments received.

Although no formal vote was taken at that meeting, a majority of Commission members (three) agreed with the staff recommendations that South First Street should be changed to a one-way street southbound from Morris Street, with parallel parking allowed on both sides of the street. Two Commission members recommended a one-way traffic pattern with parallel parking permitted on one side of the street only.

The staff's recommendation is based primarily on the input of the town's Fire Chief, who desires to see a one-way traffic pattern in order to improve public safety and increase fire access. If parking is limited to one side of the street, the staff is concerned that this loss of parking will have a significant impact on South First Street businesses.

There was also some brief discussion regarding the possible future extension of South First Street, to connect with Caledonia Street. The staff is currently beginning the process to hire consultants to begin a review of all of the issues related to the Commercial Transition zone, including the feasibility of extending South First Street.

While not included in the attached memorandum, an additional suggestion was made that a proposed one-way traffic pattern should also include the creation of a bicycle lane on South First Street. All of the Planning Commissioners mentioned their support for the creation of a bicycle lane. Staff does not recommend a bike lane because the conditions do not warrant one. Public Works' cost estimate for a bike lane is \$15,000.00+, as a traffic engineer would be required.

Other issues that have been raised, including the addition of paid parking on South First Street, have generated little support.

The staff envisions this entire project to take place over an extended period, beginning with the creation of a one-way traffic pattern beginning this Fall. Based on an estimate received from the Public Works Director, the initial cost for one-way signage installed by Public Works is approximately \$3,000.00.