

City of Melbourne, Florida
Agenda
Melbourne Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Committee

Special Meeting

City Hall Council Chamber
900 E. Strawbridge Avenue
Melbourne, FL 32901

June 26, 2025 • 5:30 PM

1. A meeting of the Melbourne Downtown Redevelopment Committee was held in the Council Chamber at 900 East Strawbridge Avenue and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Lisa Herendeen.

2. All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. The following members were:

Present: Lisa Herendeen, Chair
Bert Luer, Vice-Chair
Gerry Smith, Member
LeAnn Smithson, Member
John Lucas, Member
Chris Adams, Alternate Member
Brett Miller, Alternate Member

Absent: Marva Murray, Member (excused)
JoAnn Davis, Member (excused)

Also Present: Cindy Dittmer, Community Development Director
Douglas Dombroski, Economic Development Manager
Vice Mayor David Neuman
Mary Wolak, Recording Secretary

4. **THA Consultants Parking Management Plan Presentation**

Mr. Dombroski introduced THA Consulting (THA), the company that was hired to put together the Parking Management Plan. Jim Zullo, from THA, gave a presentation to the public and said he would welcome their feedback. Mr. Dombroski said that this has been a process, and the next steps will be to go before City Council to adopt the Parking Management Plan. Mr. Zullo gave a summary on the steps that were taken to get to this point so far. He explained that THA is planning and analyzing the parking activities downtown.

Mr. Dombroski said parking management has always been a priority to the CRA as early as 2017. The City of Melbourne and Melbourne Main Street have collaborated together with various stakeholder meetings. At that time, the public concern was about the long-term parkers taking the most convenient spots downtown. In 2022, there was another stakeholder meeting with the CRA and the community and the same issue came up again. City Council appropriated funds in 2023 to complete a parking management plan. In 2024 an RFP was posted and THA won that bid. In January 2025, 2 stakeholder meetings took place to receive the public's input.

Mr. Dombroski made it clear that the reason for this parking management plan is not to eliminate free parking downtown, there will be ample free parking even if paid parking is implemented in the future.

Jim Zullo from THA Consulting introduced himself and the company and said they have done a lot of work in the State of Florida specializing in parking management. He said each community is unique, but most communities have a management plan.

The overall goal is to distribute parking in various areas based upon length of time. This includes off-street, on-street and garage parking. During their four days of analysis, parking inventory was gathered along with analysts of problems.

He displayed a chart and map showing the utilization of the parking during weekday and weekend peak hours. Whatever actions take place, the goal is to improve accessibility and redistribute long term parkers to off-street assets. He said most downtowns do not have a parking problem; they have a “walking problem” because people are reluctant to walk 2-3 blocks. He compared this to a regional mall where people park in a large parking lot and walk further distances to get to the entrance.

He said another goal is to maximize the spots that downtown already has. When THA completed their study in January 2025, they compiled utilization of parking from Wednesday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. They found that the municipal garage was not being utilized to its capacity.

He highlighted some points from the last stakeholder meetings and some concerns the public had, such as:

- Long term/daily parking options needed
- Improvement of parking and wayfinding signage leading to garage
- Parking enforcement is needed to promote turnover
- Consider shuttles and accessibility within city and to prominent locations
- Establish a funding mechanism for parking operations.

Ms. Herendeen had a concern about paid parking on Waverly and Vernon Place and the high volume of residents in that area.

Ms. Herendeen thought that perhaps narrowing the parking spots would provide additional parking. Mr. Dombroski said parking spots can be restriped in a downtown urban area as narrow as 9 feet wide. Melbourne spaces in the garage are 10 and 11 feet wide.

There was a conversation regarding the approval and timing of the actual implementation of the plan and the ways individuals can find ways to locate free parking spaces. The idea would have to be pushed out through social media, maps, signage, etc.

Ms. Smithson did not understand why overnight parking is an issue. Mr. Zullo said the goal would be to avoid residents parking overnight for free in off-street public lots, instead of using their provided on-site parking. Monitoring would

have to be done to see if it was the same cars doing it, or it is a one-off because someone did not want to drive home intoxicated.

There was a general conversation regarding parking garages and the width, structures, ramps, parking sizes, etc. The scope of the plan did not include finding a new parking garage location, this study was conducted to see how parking spaces that currently exist can be best utilized.

6. **General Public Comment**

Moved by Lucas/Adams to recommend that public comments be limited to 3 minutes.

Motion carried unanimously.

There were approximately 40 community members in attendance.

Mr. Bill Miller, a resident of Melbourne, was disappointed with the presentation that was given. He had concerns about Depot Avenue Parking lot and Highline Apartments parking. Mr. Dombroski said there was a lease agreement at one time with Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) but they dissolved the lease, and there currently is no lease.

Mr. Scott Anderson who resides on Waverly Street, said if there is metered or paid parking on Waverly Street where is he suppose to park. He said there are 8-9 residential buildings in that small section.

Adam Deardoff, one of the owners of Foo Bar wanted to stress that leaving cars parked overnight downtown, because someone had too much to drink, is saving lives and that should not be changed. He believed carousel parking should be something to be looked at. He and his partners were willing to invest in a project like this and lease the property behind Hurricane Creek but he said the City shut the idea down.

Mr. Dombroski addressed Mr. Deardoff's comments regarding his carousel parking idea. Mr. Dombroski explained the history behind that idea, stating that City Staff provided Mr. Deardoff with City Code and information regarding private public partnerships and staff was willing to review a proposal but staff has never received such a proposal from the group. There is also a stormwater drainage requirement by St. Johns Water Management District.

Phil Smith asked if there is a shortage of parking spots downtown. Mr. Zullo said there is not a shortage in inventory, but it is the usage of the spots that is the problem.

A representative of Trinity Towers South spoke on behalf of their senior residents. She said their residents are older, some with disability in walking and on a budget, so for them to have to walk further or pay for parking is going to be really bad for them. The residents are very concerned about this and it will affect several senior affordable housing communities downtown. Mr. Luer asked if Trinity Towers had their own parking spots, and she said that it was very limited - there are 62 parking spots and 164 residents.

Laura Calfo, owner of Raintree Mercantile, spoke. She was worried about the idea of metered parking because she felt at lunchtime, it would deter customers from coming downtown, especially for the elderly, who do not know how to use, or have access to a mobile parking app. She felt if it does go that way, and there is a 2-hour parking limit, it does not give customers ample time to enjoy dinner and then go shopping afterwards. She said retail businesses are struggling already, and feels like the paid parking would make it much worse. She also wanted to make sure that business owners would not be required to pay for parking - rent cost is high enough.

Lena from Main Street Pub said she is a big supporter of “no drinking and driving” so she hoped there would be a solution to that and handicapped parking should be free.

There was a discussion regarding adaptability of mobile parking app’s features, meters, pay stations and handicapped parking challenges.

Allison Cadenza, Esq., representing the family of the new multi-family, east of The Mansion, asked if the City is looking into another parking garage and location. Ms. Herendeen said there have been no discussions regarding a new parking garage in Downtown Melbourne. She also asked if there are any plans for rehabilitation of the Front Street parking lot or loading facilities in the next 12 months.

Mr. Dombroski said anytime there is new development coming into Downtown Melbourne, staff encourages a public-private relationship to potentially partner together to get more public parking spaces. Most property is privately owned at this point.

Ms. Dittmer said the only project that she is aware of at Front Street in the future is the reconstruction of the docks and there are no parking lot changes planned in that area.

Kim Agee of Melbourne Main Street thanked THA Consulting for their presentation and all the information provided. She said this has been something that has been worked on for years and she hopes that a solution is found.

Ms. Herendeen asked what the next steps will be.

Mr. Dombroski said if there is a motion tonight to adopt this complete plan, it will move forward to City Council for approval. This plan has been a priority to City Council and the Melbourne Downtown CRA Advisory Committee to be in place prior to the Downtown Streetscape Project begins.

There was a discussion regarding enforcement costs, paid parking, citations and revenue to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment. Projections were discussed with the different phases and improved conditions.

Ms. Dittmer said there will be City Code changes necessary to implement the new Parking Management Plan and many steps will have to be addressed along the way.

Ms. Smithson had concerns that this should be kept moving forward once it is established.

Moved by Miller/Adams to recommend the general framework of the Plan, implementing Phase I Parking Enforcement and assembling a parking committee and returning to the Committee 6 months after implementation of Phase I.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Adjournment**

Ms. Herendeen adjourned the meeting at 7:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wolak
Mary Wolak, Recording Secretary