

CAR PARKING IN ISLAMABAD

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DEDICATION

*To our beloved parents and teachers
And to all those souls who worked hard for the humanity.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To have a Car has become necessity. It is no more status symbols the problem of car parking has become very difficult question in the City of Islamabad. The numbers of cars are increasing day by day. Whether it is parking on the public road or at public places car in the compounds of housing societies, the question is assuming a greater dimension day by day.

Parking is vital in ensuring that people in Islamabad can access the goods and services they need and plays an important part in sustaining the economic health of the city. It also has a crucial part to play in limiting the amount of traffic and congestion on the city's streets. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has to play a key role in managing parking in the city: this report sets out the way in which the CDA intends to do so.

The purpose of this report is to analyze the current parking situation in Islamabad and the problems associated with it. And finally the Action plan that will help to improve the current parking situation and, in so, doing:

- Support retailing, business and tourism, particularly in the city centre and traditional district and local shopping centers.
- Make it easier for residents, and city trades people and businesses, to park when and where they need to.
- Control the level of travel by car, particularly commuting and travel to edge of town shopping centers, in order to minimize congestion and other adverse effects of car travel.
- Facilitate movement on the city's streets, particularly by public transport, foot and cycle.

The purpose of this report is to set out and justify what the CDA intends to do to make parking in Islamabad easier and to contribute to the City's prosperity. The results of consultation with residents, trades people, working people, and other businesses, together with market research (interview and by telephone) are reported. The report explains how these results were then used to develop a list of parking problems experienced in the City, and objectives to deal with them. The report then presents these actions to address them.

INTRODUCTION

Parking is vital in ensuring that people in Islamabad can access the goods and services they need. The Capital Development Authority has to play a key role in managing parking in the city. This document sets out the way in which the CDA intends to manage parking in Islamabad.

In Islamabad demand for parking needs serious attention by Capital Development Authority. Parking has a direct effect on the economic vitality of retailing and business in Islamabad. If parking is not perceived to be available in certain areas, many people will simply not visit those areas. Parking is important to residents who own cars, and there is considerable pressure on on-street parking, especially in the large areas of the city that were built before the era of widespread car ownership. Parking also has a strong influence over a person's decision on whether or not to drive to any given destination. Thus parking policies directly affect traffic flow, public transport use and, therefore, congestion. In the absence of congestion charging, parking control is the only significant means that the CDA has to reduce congestion and restrain unnecessary car use.

The above illustrates the tensions that need to be resolved through the CDA's approach to parking. This report seeks to provide a coherent and balanced package of parking supply and parking regulations that will deal with these tensions and in so doing:

- Support retailing, business and tourism, particularly in the city centre and traditional district and local shopping centres
- Make it easier for residents, and city trades people and businesses, to park when and where they need to
- Control the level of travel by car, particularly commuting and travel to edge of town shopping centres, in order to minimise congestion and other adverse impacts of car travel
- Facilitate movement on the city's streets, particularly by public transport, foot and cycle.

Vision

The vision of the Capital Development Authority is one in which Islamabad becomes an easier place to park for residents, shoppers, visitors, business travellers, disabled people and trades people. It is also a vision of CDA where the negative effects of parking on other travellers, such as pedestrians or cyclists, are reduced.

Brig. Nusrat, Member Planning CDA (Personal Communication, January 5, 2007)

Methodology

Our group members have overseen extensive research work throughout the month of December 2006 investigating and analysing the parking habits, attitudes of drivers and parking situation throughout Islamabad. The work involved Questionnaire, market research and Telephonic survey with key interest groups and the results have produced a vast range of information related to parking issues in Islamabad.

The following sections give a brief outline of the work done and a summary of some of the results.

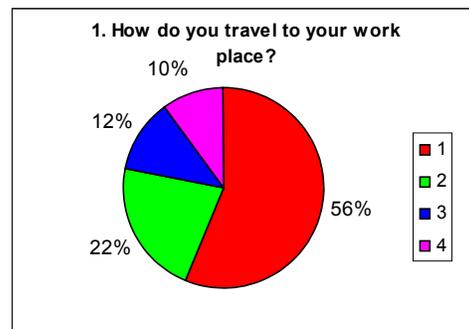
Questionnaire

Summary

A sample of 50 individuals was taken into account at key locations of Islamabad city. Survey was conducted at key locations i.e. Aabpara, Blue Area, Jinnah Super, Super Market and Sunday Bazaar. This covered every on-street parking and off-street parking users. The analysis of questionnaire is given below.

1) How do you travel to your work place?

- By Private Car
- By Public Transport
- By Motorcycle
- Transport facility of the organization



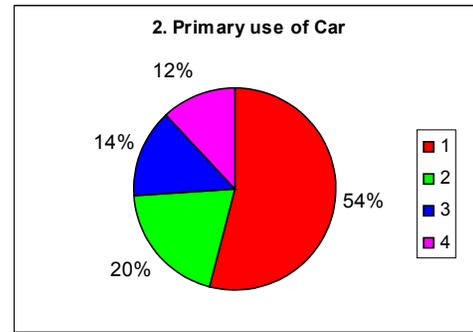
The analysis of this question suggests that

In Islamabad most of the people travel through

their own cars. Out of 50 individuals, 56% use their own cars, 22% use public transport, 12% use their motorcycles and only 10% individuals use their organization transport facility.

2) Please indicate the primary use of your car?

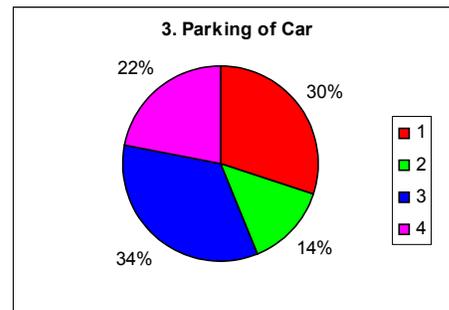
- Work
- Shopping
- School
- Social



The analysis shows that most of the people use their cars for working purpose. It is found that 54% people utilise car for work, 20% people for shopping, 12% people for social purpose and 14% people use cars to pick up their kids from school. This suggests that, Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan is now emerging as a business centre.

3) Where do you normally park your vehicle?

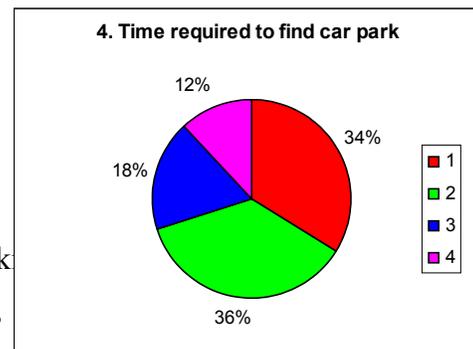
- Parking lot
- Parking ramp
- On the road
- On the street



The results shows that 30% people mentioned that they park their cars in parking lot, 14% park their cars in parking ramp, 34% park their cars on roads and 22% people park their cars on street. This analysis shows the shortage of proper car parking lots in Islamabad.

4) If driving or being driven, how long does it take you to find a parking place?

- Straight away
- 5-10 minutes
- 15 minutes or longer
- Quite Difficult



34% respondents mentioned that they find car park straight away, 36% respondents take 5-10 minutes to find a car park space and 18% respondents

take 15 minutes or longer to find a car in key locations of Islamabad and remaining 12% respondents it is quite difficult to find a car parking place.

5) How would you rate the current parking facilities in Islamabad?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor



Only 6% respondents rate parking facilities in Islamabad excellent, 27% respondents rate it good, 31% and 36% respondents rate car parking facilities Fair and Poor respectively. This analysis suggests that most of the people are not satisfied with the current parking facilities.

6) If the desired car parking is occupied, what are your likely responses?

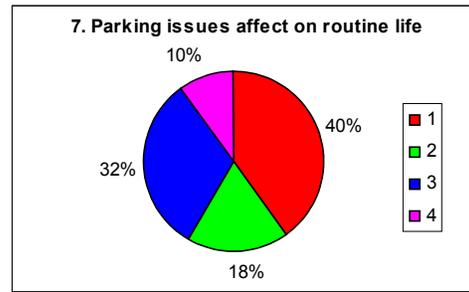
- Park wherever it seems possible
- Tension/Frustration
- Try to find the alternative
- Indifferent



The respondent responses to the occupied Parking varied based on the analysis of Questionnaire, that is, most of the respondents 46% mentioned that they try to find the alternative parking place, 30 % feel stressed and frustrated, 14% park wherever it seems possible and 10% remain indifferent to the situation.

7) How car parking issues effect your daily routine life?

- Very much
- To some an extent
- It depends
- Not at all



40% of respondents mentioned that parking issues very much affect their routine life, 18% and 32% respondents routine life is affected to some an extent by parking issues and it depends on the situation and finally 10% respondent routine life is not affected by parking issues. The analysis shows that most of the people routine life is affected due to Car parking issues. ***Overall analysis shows that parking issues one way or another affect economic vitality of the city.***

8) What are the main reasons of car park issues?

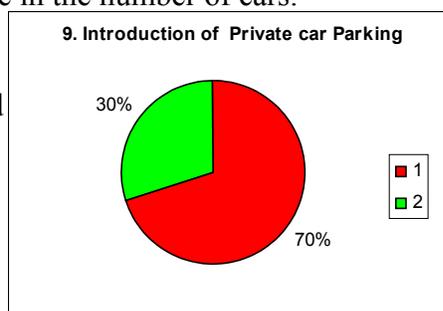
- Heavy traffic
- No proper planning for car parks
- Drivers do not have parking etiquettes
- All of the above



When asked about the main reasons responsible for car parking issues, majority of the respondents (54%) indicated that the *heavy traffic, no proper car park planning* and *parking etiquettes* supplement parking issues in Islamabad, 24% respondents indicated that the parking issues emerge as a result of *no proper car park planning* and 16% respondents reason the lack of parking etiquettes in drivers responsible for car parking issues. Whereas only 6% people indicated that parking issues come into view due to increase in the number of cars.

9) Do you agree that an individual car should

- Yes

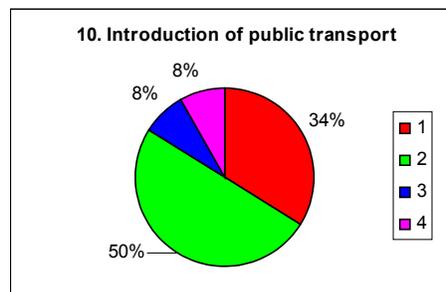


- No

The purpose of this question was to get the Respondents' views and opinions about the introduction of private car parking in Islamabad. 70% people agreed to introduce private car parking in Islamabad whereas only 30% showed resistance to the introduction of private car parking in the key locations of Islamabad.

10) If public transport is promoted which medium you would prefer to travel by?

- Private car
- Public transport
- Motorcycle
- Others



50% of the respondents indicated that they would use Public transport instead of private cars provided that Government takes corrective actions to improve existing system of public transport. Whereas 34% of the respondents said that they would prefer to use their own cars. The rest of respondents affirmed to use other mediums (i.e. Motorcycle, Cycle etc) of transport.

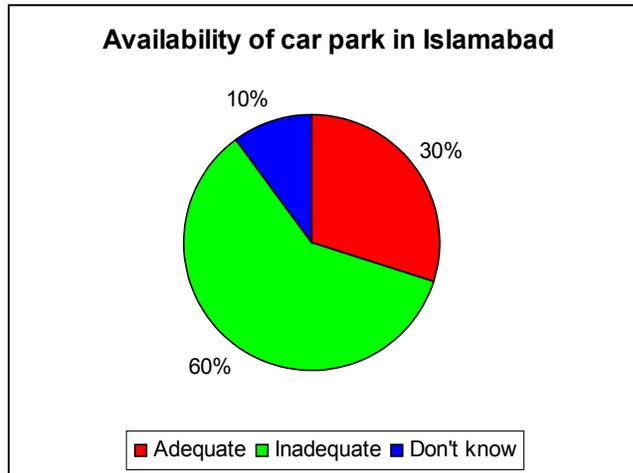
Telephone Interviews

The telephone surveys took place over a one week period and used a Computer Aided Telephone survey method of data collection to target agreed quotas of residents from certain areas. This proved an effective way of securing an even distribution of respondents from throughout Islamabad and neighboring areas. The interview was 5 minutes long.

A summary of the key findings is as follows:

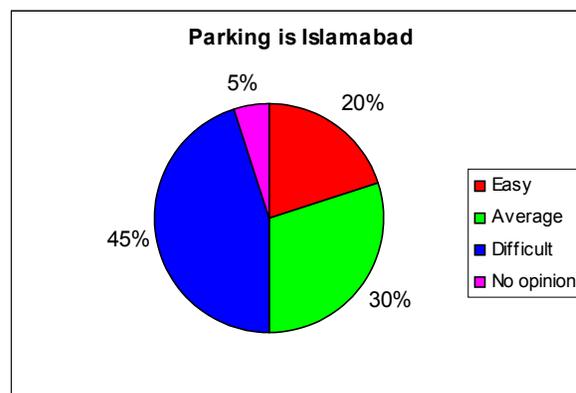
Do you think the availability of parking in Islamabad is...?

- Adequate 30%
- Inadequate 60%
- Don't know 10%



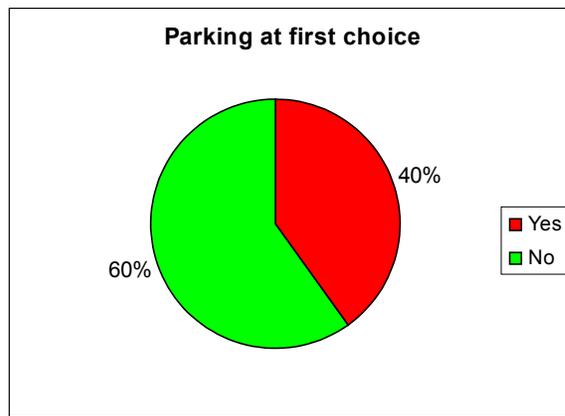
How easy would you say it is to park in Islamabad?

- Easy 20%
- Average 30%
- Difficult 45%
- No opinion 5%



Off street users – Are you usually able to park at your first choice of car park?

- Yes 40%
- No 60%



On street users – Are you usually able to park at your first choice of on-street location?

- Yes 46.0%
- No 54.0%



65% of all respondents said the reason they visited the city key locations was 100% related to parking issues.

The responses to the policy questions can be summed up as shown in Table 1.4 below.

Table 1.4 – Summary of Policy Questions

<i>Policy Statement</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>
Car parking issues can be resolved through the introduction of private car parking	62	38
The CDA/Traffic Police should strictly enforce parking restrictions at peak times	87	8
Illegal parking is a serious problem in Islamabad	67	13
Parking on pavements is a problem in Islamabad	61	11

CAR PARKING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

Introduction

This chapter forms the basic framework of the parking strategy. It is structured around the following parking themes:

- Marketing, Public Relations and Economic Impacts;
- Off Street Parking;
- On Street Parking;
- Development Control

For each of these themes, this chapter follows the same basic structure. First, problems and issues affecting the relevant aspect of parking are discussed. Chapter 3 then sets out an action plan for each problem.

As discussed earlier, the objectives sum up the overall goals that the CDA should seek to achieve with its parking policy, and flow from the identification of problems and issues set out in this chapter.

Problems and Issues

There are a wide variety of problems and issues that relate to parking. These are discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of this Chapter, but they, and the customer groups whom they affect, are summarised in Table 2.1, below.

Marketing, Public Relations and Economic Impacts

The way in which parking policy impacts on the image and economic vitality of the city is discussed in this section.

Problems and Issues

Effect of parking on retail sales

Many with an interest in the city's economy argue that the declining retail performance of the city is linked to a perceived shortage of accessible and high quality parking, and to a perception (confirmed by consultation Trades People) that the CDA's parking enforcement operation could be more welcoming – although this is not an issue that is confined only to Islamabad. In an era of increasing car ownership and strong competition from edge of City retailing most, if not all, in-city retailers would like to have flexible, easy access parking very close to their stores. Care must be taken however, with simply creating more in-city parking facilities. Making parking easier will encourage more people to drive, leading to more traffic, and quite possibly reduced bus use together with increased congestion. This in itself can undermine the city, both directly, and through its environmental effects.

Information on parking etiquettes

Market research and consultation for this report has confirmed that many people feel that finding off-street parking in and around the city key locations is difficult. Some 60% of telephone survey respondents believed that parking is difficult in the city key locations. In contrast, surveys of both off-street car parks and on-street public parking show that there is insufficient car parking space available at the busiest times. A survey of people who had parked in the city key locations carried out in December 2006, found that approximately two thirds of people (60-65%) found it either hard or very hard to park and the rest of people found it easier. The main reason for not finding car park is the public's poor understanding of parking across the city of Islamabad. It is a known fact that the parking lots in key locations of the city cannot accommodate everyone's' vehicles. Because of this, getting a parking space in less than 10 minutes is a miracle. People usually have to deal with an average of a 15-minute wait when skimming slowly through the parking lots at the peak hours. Apart from the test of patience comes the competition with other drivers who, too, are competing for a parking spot.

Yes, it is the never-ending battle of the parking spaces — the survival of the fittest. Where the driver with the best eye and the quickest response time, and with the fastest car gets the parking space. The other drivers are left in a dust of frustration. This is a common occurrence. Surely there must be a more civilized way of dealing with all of that

madness. A crushing number of people agree that there is a much more considerate way of approaching the frustration of obtaining a parking space. Parking etiquette is something everyone should know about and practice.

Problems with parking aren't going to change anytime soon, but by following and keeping the general parking etiquettes in mind, people can reduce the amount of confusion and hostility in the key locations parking lots.

Off Street Parking

The availability and quality of public off-street parking (e.g. Public car parks) are issues that are linked to the economic vitality of Islamabad city.

Problems and Issues

Perceived shortage of off-street parking

There is a perception that there is a shortage of public parking, either overall in the city or in the key locations. In telephone market research for this perception of off-street parking, 60% of respondents felt that availability of car parking in the city key locations was 'inadequate'. Also, when asked for ideas for improvements to city centre off-street parking, 37% of those interviewed suggested more car parks and or spaces.

In fact, there are at the time of writing approximately over 1,500 off-street spaces in the city centre, with peak maximum weekday occupancy of 95%. So at any one time there are very few free spaces available. The two busiest and most occupied car parks (i.e. Blue Area and Sunday Bazaar) have peak utilisation of over 100%. The one area where there is a lack of off-street parking facilities is Aabpara market. This was also picked up in the market research, with some respondents singling out this area as lacking in parking provision.

It should be noted that often off-street car parks, at various locations, have recently closed for indefinite time due to the new roads constructions and redevelopment of damage

roads, approximately with the temporary loss of around 200 - 250 spaces this shows that the off-street parking situation in the city of Islamabad needs to be improved.

Quality of off-street parking provision – including signing to car parks

The quality of the off-street parking experience takes in a range of factors, from finding the car park, through the car park environment, feelings of personal and vehicle security. There is a perception among a number of people that the quality of this experience in the city of Islamabad is not as high as it could be, and that this may be a factor in people's decisions as to whether or not to choose the city locations for shopping or entertainment during peak hours.

Market research suggests that there is an ample room for improvement. In the city of Islamabad parking experience satisfaction levels are low. For example, when asked to rate, out of 10, a series of factors relating to the off-street parking experience, 70% of respondents rated Directional signs, directional signs within the car parks, cleanliness and personal security at 4 (Poor) or below.

Areas where satisfaction level is lowest are not properly monitored by CDA concerned department.

The renewal of the variable message signing to city key locations car parks, and installation of new variable message signs on the apparatus to the city can be identified as an important component of improving marketing and information on parking in Islamabad. (These will help to manage traffic during major events and can also sign motorists to the park.)

On Street Parking

On-street parking is vitally important for shoppers, residents and businesses alike, especially in those parts of the city with little off-street parking.

Problems and Issues

Supply of and demand for on-street parking

Most of the key locations were built before the advent of the proper car park. Demand for parking space is such that, without parking controls, there is insufficient parking supply to meet all demands for car access that arise today. The CDA should properly manage on-street parking in many areas in order to balance supply and demand and to give priority to certain user groups (e.g. shoppers, residents) over others (e.g. commuters). The need to manage on-street parking demand in relation to supply is one of the emerging challenges for CDA.

Perceived shortage of public on-street parking

The telephone market research carried out for this report found that 55% of respondents felt that availability of car parking in the city at first choice is not possible. When asked to score 'ease of finding a parking space' out of 10, only 26% gave a score of 7 or more out of 10, with 42% giving a score of 4 or less.

This picture contrasts with both figures on utilisation of on-street parking areas, and the perceptions of users of the areas. The utilisation or occupancy level of key locations survey shows that, there is no sufficient space on the streets/roads during the peak hours.

It is considered that the perception of the difficulty of finding on-street parking space among the general population is strongly related to the fact that a very high proportion of drivers are attempting to park in a small proportion of the available on-street parking spaces. Those who said they parked on-street in the city of Islamabad claimed that the demand of on-street parking exceeds the total supply of on-street parking during busiest timings.

Loading and unloading

The businessman and tradespersons highlighted a concern that in some areas there is insufficient on-street space for loading. Pakistan economy is in growth enabling more people to do their own businesses. Therefore the available parking spaces for loading and unloading (business activities) are reducing day by day.

Impact of parking and loading on congestion

Parking and loading activity, by its nature, removes space for moving traffic, and one of the key roles of parking regulations is to keep relevant sections of road clear of stationary vehicles. Parking, loading and unloading activity on busy roads can cause major upstream congestion and, if carried out illegally can negate the value of these facilities. The market research showed very strong support (87%) for strict enforcement of parking regulations at peak times.

At present most parking restrictions do not apply on Sundays or in the evenings. The growing amount of activity in the Sunday Bazaar has been causing increasing congestion, in a large part caused by the uncontrolled on-street parking. This is illustrated by the fact that people schedule their shopping to purchase fresh foods and vegetables on Sunday than on any other day. There are also more localised congestion problems in other parts of the city.

Perceptions about enforcement

The CDA's parking enforcement regime has a negative image. In particular, there are no parking attendants (except Sunday bazaar), who should regulate the movement of cars on the on-street parking. There should be parking attendants at the key locations (i.e. Blue Area, Aabpara, Super and Jinnah Super market). There is a perception that parking attendants in Sunday Bazaar are inflexible and that they should have some discretion to be more lenient in certain situations

In order to ensure a fair and consistent approach, attendants should be issued with clear criteria on when and when not to issue parking penalty charge notices.

Attendants should be given a training course before they take up their duties. Reflecting the fact that a large part of parking attendants' time is occupied by answering queries from visitors and tourists, the course should include a 'welcome host' element. The

course should also include a module on ‘conflict management’ – intended to help the attendants deal with the inevitable conflicts involved in their job in a professional manner.

Double parking, footway parking and parking on junctions

Double parking and junction parking breach the Highway Code; can cause danger by reducing sightlines, and cause congestion and obstruction to other road users. Double parking can block the street to general traffic and the emergency and refuse services (see figure. 01 in Appendix-Figure). Footway parking can severely reduce the width of already narrow footways, causing particular difficulties for those with buggies, luggage or in wheelchairs. The market research carried out for this report found 67% of respondents felt that ‘illegal parking is a serious problem in Islamabad, while just over half of respondents felt that footway parking was a problem. The survey of car-owning residents of the Islamabad found that majority of people agreed that footway parking is a problem that should be dealt with by CDA and Traffic police.

Parking in bus stops

There are many bus stops in the city where it is quite legal for drivers to park, and particularly in dense residential areas, or near shopping parades, many do so. This causes problems for bus passengers who cannot safely exit the bus. It also reduces the value of bus operators’ investment in low floor buses, and is likely to break the rules of the ministry of transport, which places new responsibilities on CDA to make the external street environment accessible for people. However, the need for buses to access the kerb must be balanced against the parking and access demands of local shops and businesses; bus boarders can often provide a useful compromise.

Development Control

The CDA’s Development Control standards set out the amount and form of parking required and/or permitted in new developments.

Development control parking standards

Parking standards for new development have an important influence on the emerging business activities of Islamabad. Several new development schemes are underway in the city, Centaurus is one them.

ACTION PLAN

Introduction

This chapter, as its title suggests, sets out the actions to address all issues and problems effectively.

Objectives

Use parking policy to help to maintain and improve the economic vitality of the city and local shopping centres at key locations.

Member Planning CDA Brig. Nusrat and Traffic Engineer CDA Azam Lodhi outlined actions to be implemented. (Personal Communication, January 5, 2007)

Marketing and Public Relations

Action Plan

- Implement improved car parking signage in the key locations of the city. This involves signs from the city bypass directing people to the safe and secure car parks.
- Renovate and extend the parking Variable Message System. The renewal of the variable message signing to city key locations car parks, and installation of new variable message signs on the apparatus to these locations is an important

component of improving marketing and information on parking in Islamabad. These will help manage traffic during major events and can also sign motorists to the park and ride sites.

- Undertake marketing to improve the knowledge of drivers regarding car park in the city. The marketing should include publicity through the local press, possible radio advertising and widespread distribution of information leaflets.
- Continue to monitor the training and monitoring of parking attendants to ensure best practice is maintained.
- Introduce a new style of Traffic Regulation Order advertising for the notices that are posted on-street and advertised in the newspaper. The new notices will include a plain description and, wherever possible, easy to understand diagrams of proposals.

Off Street Parking

Action Plan

- Work with the private sector and car park operators to develop and construct underground or multi-storey (either traditional or automated) public off street car parks in appropriate locations in the city key locations. Initially facilitate a pilot underground car park at various locations. The principal longer term goal is to build several car parks at the key locations of the city.
- Work with parking operators to encourage them to meet best practice standards in off-street parking provision in existing car parks.
- Through the planning system, seek to achieve same best practice standards to be met in any new off street car park development.
- Aim to resolve issues caused by the current development programme by CDA (Construction of new roads).

- Develop proposals for the expansion of other existing Park so that these improvements can take place as and when demand justifies this.
- Work with bus operators to develop and market competitive ticketing strategies for park, such as family pricing or combination parking and bus tickets.

On Street Parking

Action Plan

- Conduct an annual review of occupancies of on-street parking, and adjust as appropriate.
- Permit liveried vans and goods vehicles to load and unload in resident's areas.
- Develop criteria to inform decisions on the allocation of on-street parking space. The criteria will take into account type of streets/roads, issues such as whether the street is significant for buses/cyclists and existing residential.
- Introduce penalties system according to the severity of the offence –Charge penalty for overstaying a meter, parking in a bus lane/Taxi lane or staying on a main street at peak time. By the Introduction of such penalties Traffic Police can control traffic problems.
- Develop a prioritised programme of parking restrictions to improve pedestrian accessibility and mobility, to improve junction capacities and to reduce delays on bus routes.
- Introduce a citywide ban of all footway parking, with appropriate exceptions at specific locations, subject to enabling legislation. Any exceptions must maintain pedestrian accessibility.
- In discussion with the police, review the potential for adopting a common enforcement regime to address on-street parking problems.
- Generate awareness of parallel parking in people to efficiently utilise on-street car parking space. (See figure 02 in Appendix-Figures)

Development Control

Action Plan

- Review the standards governing the amount of parking permitted in new developments. These changes will include reducing the amount of parking permitted in new suburban shopping and leisure developments and reviewing the amount of parking permitted in new city housing developments.
- Review the current Development Control parking standards and the approach to providing parking in very large high density flatted developments.
- Produce new supplementary planning guidance on urban design principles for parking associated with new developments. This guidance will look to reduce the visual impact of car parking and reduce the walking distance between buildings, and between buildings and public transport routes.

APPENDIX – 1

Bahria University
Questionnaire (Car Parking)
January 2007

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Occupation: _____

Age: _____

1) How do you travel to your work place?

- By Private Car
- By Public Transport
- By Motorcycle
- Transport facility of the organization

2) Please indicate the primary use of your car?

- Work
- Shopping
- School
- Social

3) Where do you normally park your vehicle?

- Parking lot
- Parking ramp
- On the road
- On the street

4) If driving or being driven, how long does it take you to find a parking place?

- Straight away
- 5-10 minutes
- 15 minutes or longer
- Quite Difficult

5) How would you rate the current parking facilities in Islamabad?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

6) If the desired car parking is occupied, what are your likely responses?

- Park wherever it seems possible
- Tension/Frustration
- Try to find the alternative
- Indifferent

7) How car parking issues effect your daily routine life?

- Very much
- To some an extent
- It depends
- Not at all

8) What are the main reasons of car park issues?

- Heavy traffic
- No proper planning for car parks
- Drivers do not have parking etiquettes
- All of the above

9) Do you agree that an individual car should be charged for private car parking?

- Yes
- No

10) If public transport is promoted which medium you would prefer to travel by?

- Private car

- Public transport
- Motorcycle
- Others

Telephone Interview

1. Do you think the availability of parking in Islamabad is...?
 - Adequate
 - Inadequate
 - Don't know
2. How easy would you say it is to park in Islamabad?
 - Easy
 - Average
 - Difficult
 - No opinion
3. Off street users – Are you usually able to park at your first choice of car park?
 - Yes
 - No
4. On street users – Are you usually able to park at your first choice of on-street location?
 - Yes
 - No

Appendix – 2 (Figures)

Figure 1: Double car parking

Double parking is the usually illegal practice of parking a vehicle to the side of a row of vehicles that is already parked next to the curb. This



often prevents some of the vehicles in the first row from departing and always obstructs traffic.

Figure 02: Parallel car parking

Parallel parking is a method of parking a vehicle in line with other parked cars. Cars parked in parallel are in one line, parallel to the curb, with the front bumper of each car facing the back bumper of an adjacent one. Since parallel parking is parallel to the curb of a road, roads that facilitate said parking have an extra lane or a large shoulder for parked cars.

