

Survey of Downtown Parkers Chicago IL

Spring, 2003



Study conducted for

Parking Industry Labor Management Committee

by

Siim Sööt, Ph.D.

Urban Transportation Specialist

678 Foxdale, Winnetka IL 60093-1950

(847) 446-7560, (847) 372-7560 - cell

siim@uic.edu <http://www.uic.edu/~siim>

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Executive Summary

Survey of Downtown Parkers Chicago, IL

In late May and early June 2003 several thousand surveys were distributed to parkers in eleven downtown Chicago parking facilities. Eight of the eleven parking facilities surveyed are in the Loop, one is west of the River (Union Station) and two are north of the River (IBM Plaza and Rush and Ohio Streets). The multistory parking facilities ranged in size from 500 to 1200 spaces. A total of 1380 usable surveys were returned.

The major findings in this study are the following:

- Cook County residents account for the largest portion of downtown parkers (70%). Chicago accounts for 63% of these parkers.
- Chicago residents account for 4% more total hours of parking than the six-county suburban residents.
- Chicago residents park for 26 minutes longer, on average, than suburban residents.
- Chicago residents park on more days per week, on average, than suburban residents. 42% of the city residents and 28% of suburban residents park at least five times a week.
- The proportion of city of Chicago parkers varies by garage.
- An overwhelming portion of the parkers comes downtown to work (82%). Personal business is the second most common purpose for being downtown with 12% of the parkers. Shoppers only account for 2% of the parkers.
- Comparing city and suburban parkers, the place of residence accounts for only minor differences in the purposes for downtown trips.
- Respondents who come downtown to work park longer hours and more frequently than other respondents.
- Some city neighborhoods are disproportionately represented among downtown parkers, e.g., the far south side near 71st to 95th Streets and the near north side. The former is an area populated largely by minorities located more than an hour from downtown by public transit.
- Inability to survey Park District garages, e.g., in Grant Park, is a reason why the proportion of the parkers residing in Chicago was not higher.

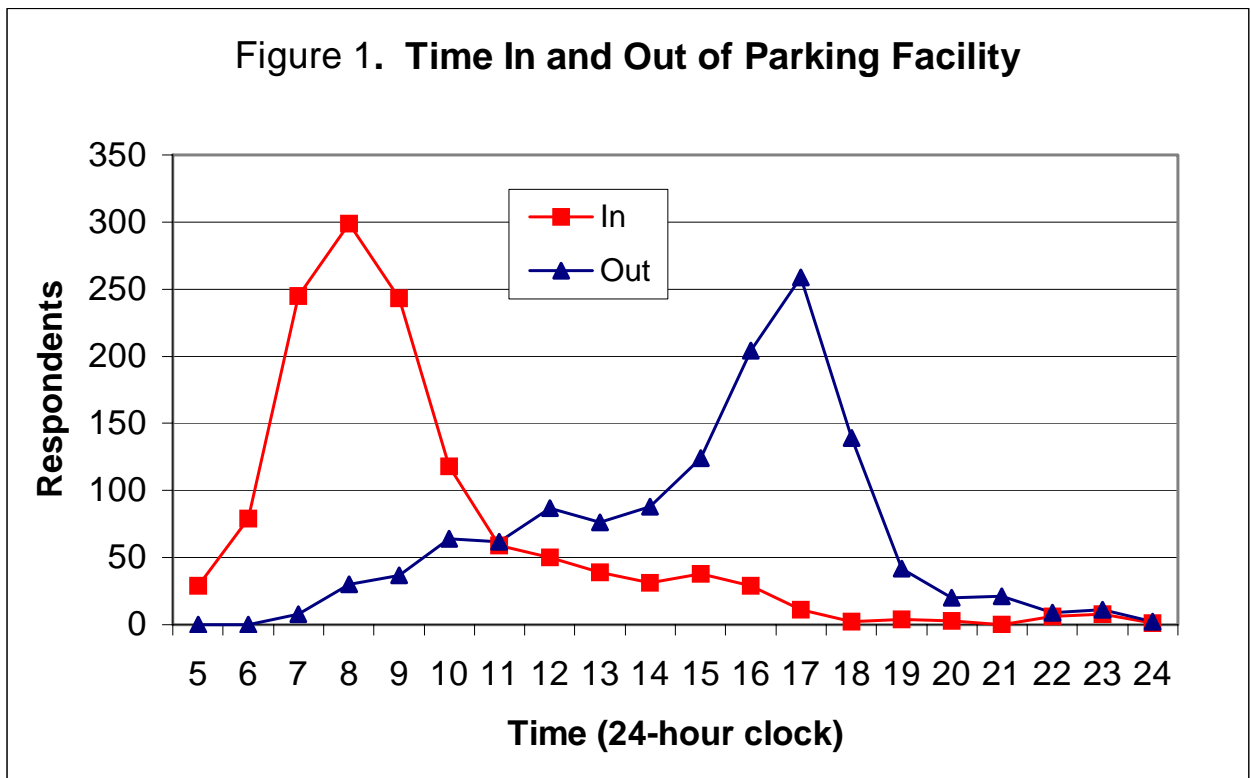
The study is described in two parts. Part I describes the results of the data analysis and Part II describes the data-collection process.

Part I. Results of the Parking Survey

This analysis is based on 1380 useable surveys. Due to non-responses to individual questions, the number of responses for any particular question may be less than 1380. The survey was conducted in late May and early June 2003 in eleven downtown parking facilities.

1. Time of Arrival and Departure

The time parkers entered and left the parking facility conforms to our expectation (Figure 1) and is very similar to other graphs displaying travel activity to and from downtown Chicago. This is presented to provide evidence that the surveys will yield meaningful information.



2. Place of Residence of Downtown Parkers

Of particular interest is the place of residence of the parkers. Table 1 shows that, in aggregate, 44% of the parkers reside in the City of Chicago. The percentages range from less than 30% for garages in the core of the Loop to over 50% at two facilities in the southwestern part of the downtown. Using computer software to estimate ZIP codes that straddle county lines, the estimate for the number of parkers residing in Cook County is 950 or 70% of the parkers.

Considering only the six-county metro area residents, Chicago accounts for 47% of the parkers while Cook County accounts for 78%. These areas account for 36% and 66% of the metropolitan population, respectively.

Table 1
**Number of Usable Responses and
 Proportion of Parkers Residing in the City of Chicago**

Garage	Responses	Chicago	Percent Chicago
1 – Sears	90*	49	54%
2 – Madison / Wells	31	13	42%
3 – 203 LaSalle	167	73	44%
4 – Rush/Ohio	127	53	42%
5 – Trader Towers	269	106	39%
6 – South Loop	110	42	38%
7 – IBM	86	38	44%
8 – Washington / Franklin	165	46	28%
9 – Adams / Wabash	45	20	44%
10 – Franklin / Lake	202	77	38%
11- Union Station	72	37	51%
Total – raw data	1364	554	41%
Data Factored to garage size			44%
Cook County Estimate		950	70%

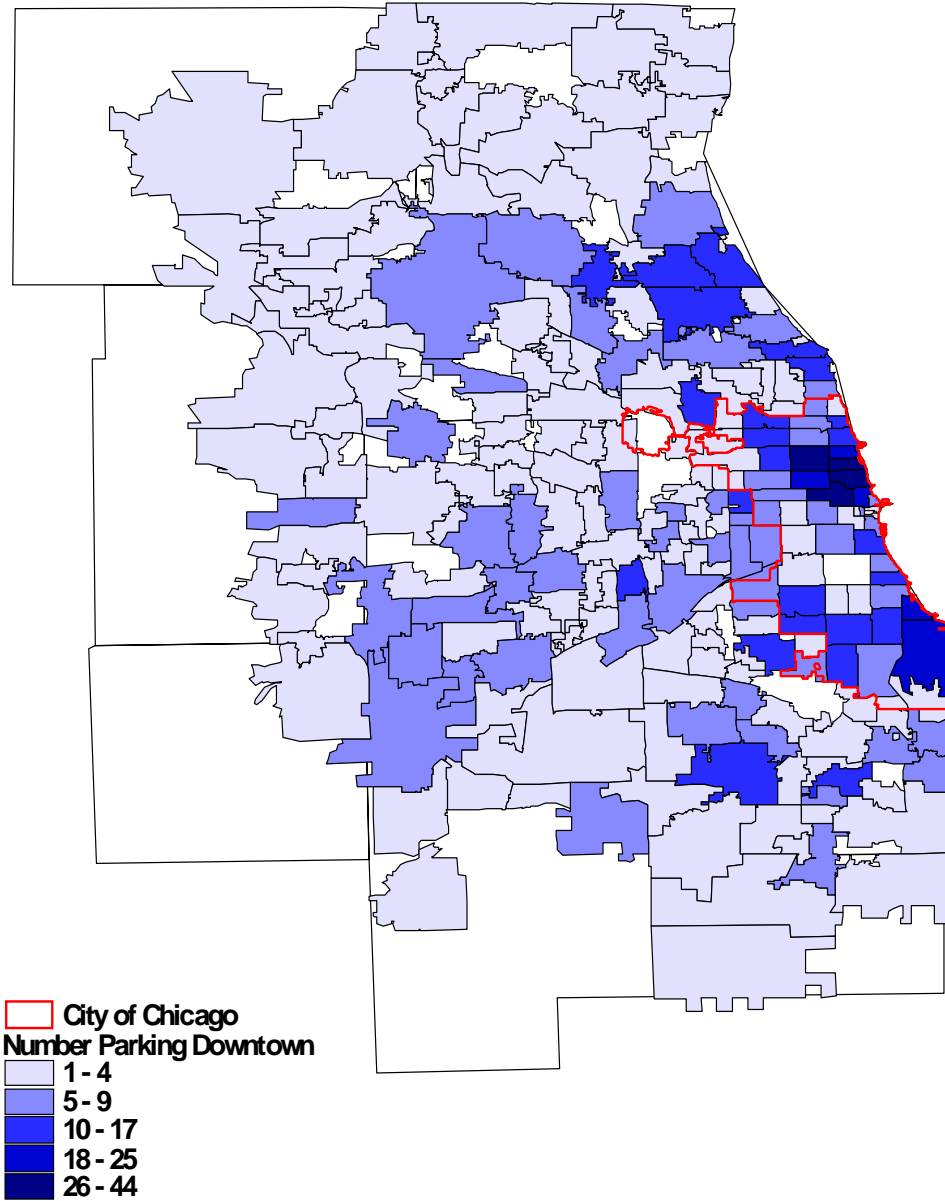
* The responses vary from 45 to 269. The low responses were at garages with no rewards for completed surveys but they were generally located near other garages. The geographic distribution of survey returns provides a more even coverage than is evident from the garage returns, e.g., the Madison/Wells facility is located close to the Sears garage; together they have 121 responses.

Map 1 illustrates the distribution of parkers by Zip-code areas. It shows that the largest concentration of parkers is from the near north side. Four adjacent ZIPs (60613,60614,60622 and 60657) just north of the downtown together account for 132 parkers. On the far south side of the city, largely from 71st to 95th Streets, four adjacent ZIPs have 76 downtown parkers. By contrast, the largest cluster of suburban parkers in four adjacent ZIPs is in the Highland Park-Deerfield-Buffalo Grove-Northbrook area. These ZIPs have 15,13, 12, and 10 parkers respectively for a total of 50 parkers. Four affluent north shore communities, Glencoe, Winnetka, Northfield and Kenilworth, together recorded 16 parkers and when Wilmette is added

it rises collectively to only 31. This total is lower than several single city ZIP-code areas.

Map 1

Survey Results: Distributions of Residences of Downtown Parking

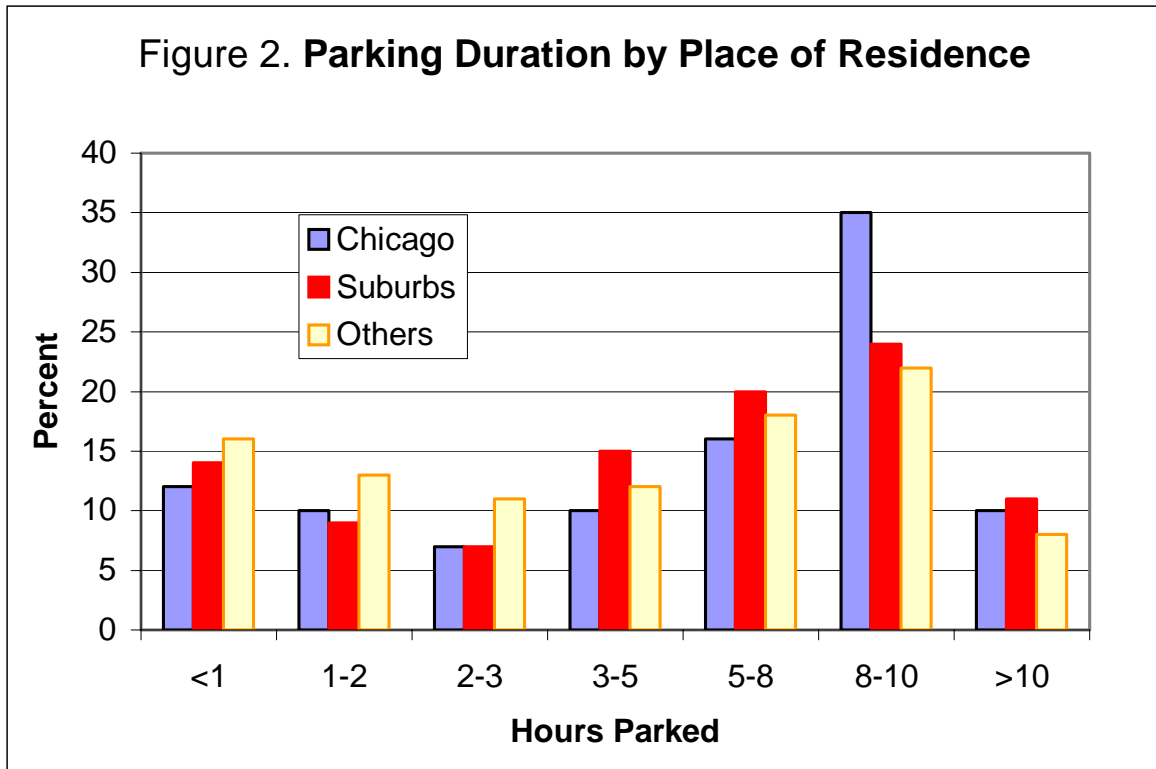


2.1 Duration of Parking by Place of Residence

There is a distinct difference in the duration of parking based on place of residence (Figure 2). For all parkers, the number of parkers declines for each category less

than three hours and then increases until the 8-10-hour category. This pattern may reflect the parking rates that change very little after two hours.

The differences between city and suburban parkers are most evident after three hours of parking. Suburban residents are more likely to park from 3 to 8 hours, while city of Chicago residents parked for more hours. The 8-to-10-hours is the most common for all groups, but Chicago residents score more than ten percentage points higher than suburbanites (35% versus 24%) in this category



In this report the City of Chicago is defined as ZIP codes with 606 as the three leading digits. Suburban areas have 60 as the two leading digits, other than 606. The category 'other' includes all other ZIP codes. Many of these 'other' respondents are from Indiana.

2.2 Parking Frequency by Place of Residence

There is also a decided difference between city and suburban respondents in parking frequency (Figure 3). Parkers residing in Chicago are much more likely to park five or more times a week than are suburban residents. The difference is nearly 15 percentage points (42% versus 28%, Table 2). There is little difference between these two groups in parking three or four times a week but at less than three times a week the suburbanites dominate. Almost a quarter of the suburbanites park less than once a week (23%) and they are also more likely to park once or twice a week. Respondents from 'other' places park less frequently.

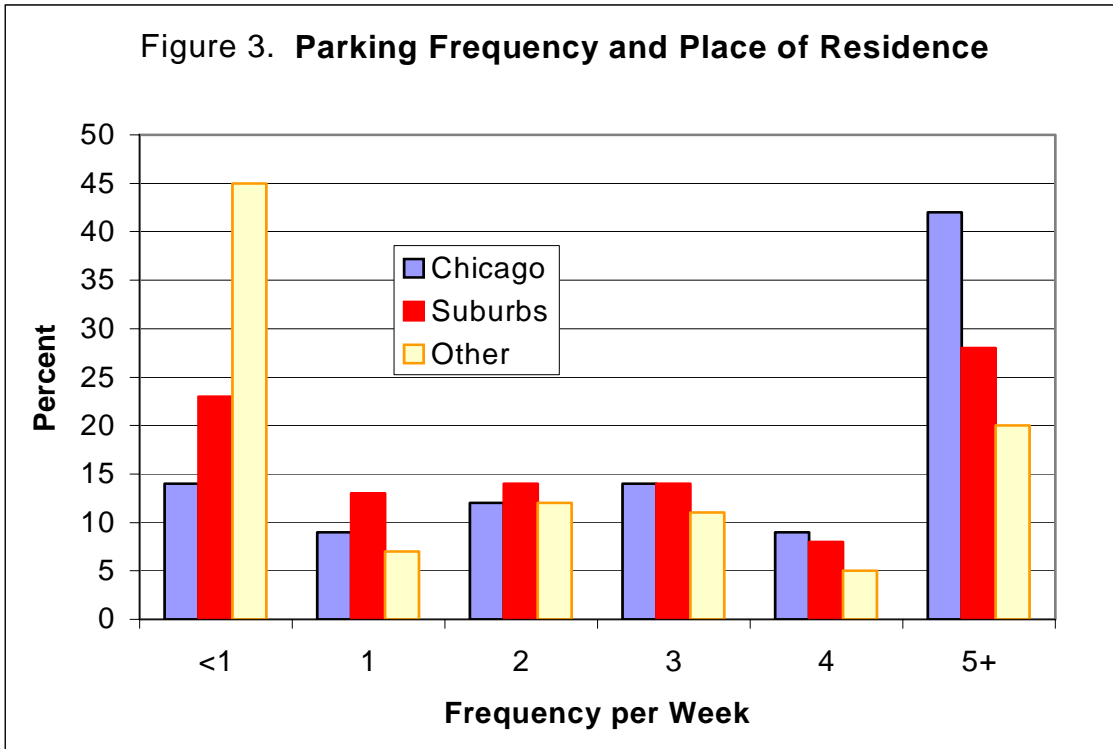


Table 2 also shows that while the least frequent parkers are predominantly suburbanites (160 versus 77), Chicago residents outnumber suburban residents in the five-or-more category. Clearly city residents park more frequently than suburbanites.

Table 2
Frequency of Parking Downtown by Place of Residence

	Parking Frequency (per week)						Total
	<1	1	2	3	4	5+	
City	77	48	68	78	49	229	549
	14%	9%	12%	14%	9%	42%	100
Suburbs	160	95	100	101	55	198	709
	23%	13%	14%	14%	8%	28%	100

In considering (a) the frequency of respondents coming downtown together with (b) the frequency with which they park, the highest-frequency category has a majority of Chicago residents (Table 3). By coincidence there are 344 city and 344 suburban respondents who come downtown five or more times per week. Almost two-thirds of these city respondents (65%) park five or more times. By contrast only 56% of the suburbanites park five or more times a week.

Table 3
Parking Frequency among those who Come Downtown Often

Parking frequency	<1	1	2	3	4	5+	Total
Come downtown four times a week							
City	3	2	1	6	26	0	38
Suburbs	3	5	6	6	37	0	57
Come downtown five or more times a week							
City	21	17	30	30	22	224	344
Suburbs	35	36	30	35	14	194	344

Pursuing this line of examination further leads to estimates of how *many hours respondents park per week*. This requires the assumption that the day of the survey was typical of the parking duration on other days in the week.

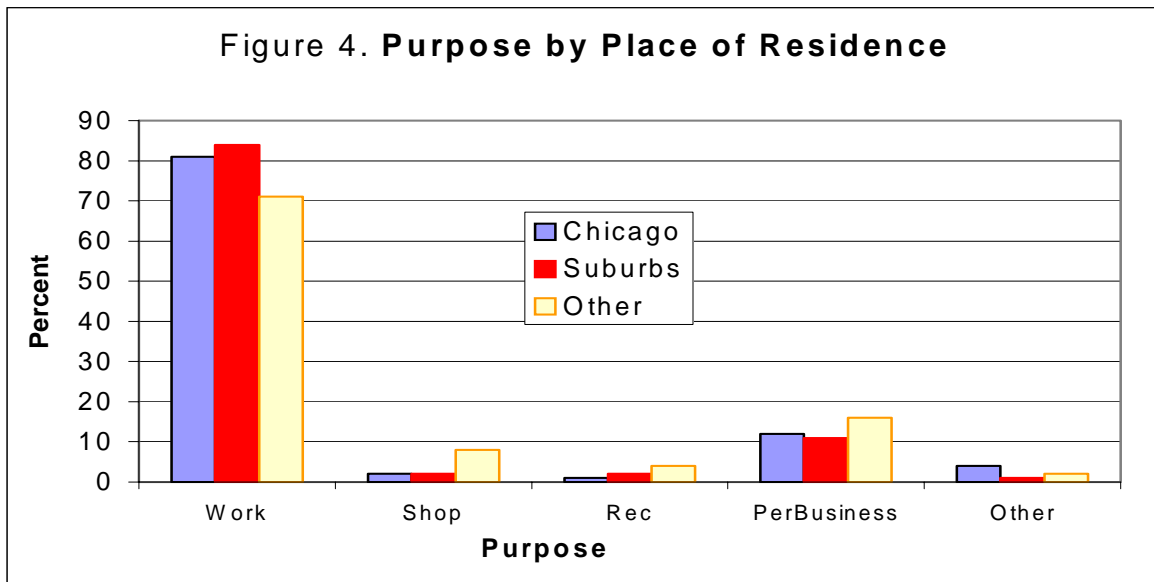
Table 4 displays the calculations. There are more suburban respondents than Chicago respondents but because Chicagoans park more frequently the weekly-parking gap is smaller, 1751 parkers to 1808 parkers. Further, the average parking duration of Chicago respondents is 26 minutes longer at 6.76 hours versus 6.32 hours for suburbanites. This yields over 11,000 hours per week for both groups. The total for Chicago residents is 4% higher than for suburbanites.

Table 4
Number of Parkers and Hours Parked

Place of Residence	Parkers	Time per Week	Hours per Day	Hours per Week
Chicago	549	1751	6.76	11,837
Suburbs	709	1808	6.32	11,427

2.3 Purpose for Being Downtown by Place of Residence

Unlike the previous discussion, there is remarkably little difference between city and suburban residents in their reason for being downtown (Figure 4). Work is the overwhelming reason, accounting for over 80% for both city and suburban residents. Parkers who live outside the metropolitan area have a lower percentage, but it is 70% even for this group.



For all three groups personal business is the second highest reason and in each case it accounts for over ten percent of the trips. Parkers who are downtown for shopping or recreation are most likely to reside outside the Chicago six-county metropolitan area.

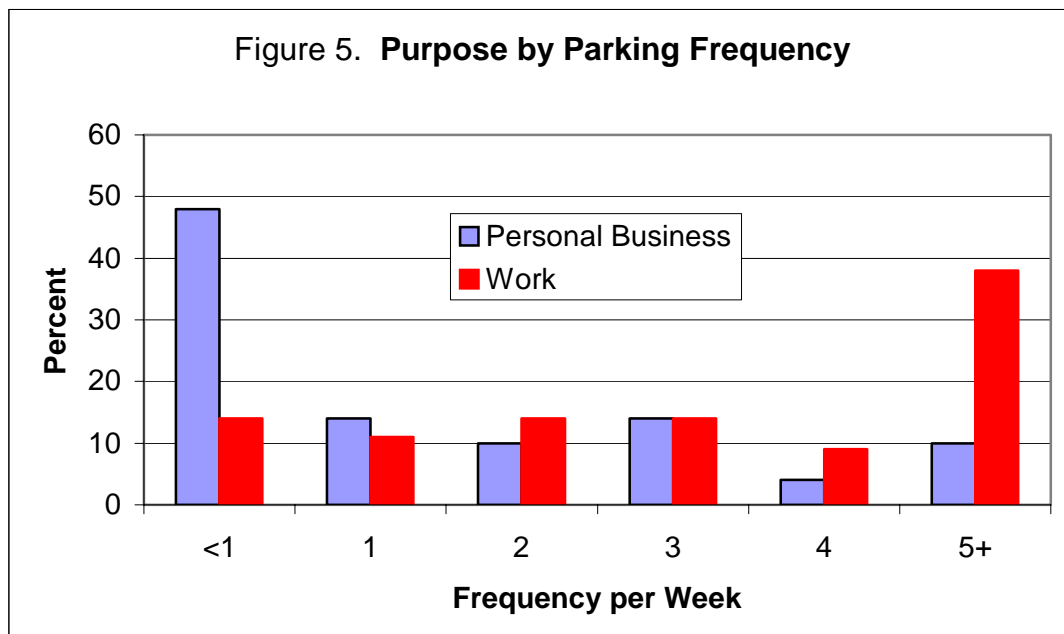
Clearly the purpose for being downtown also varies by parking facility. With less than 10% of the respondents, the garage at Rush and Ohio Streets accounts for more than half of all the shoppers (Table 5). It also accounts for nearly half of the parkers who came downtown for recreation. Conversely, the facility at 203 North LaSalle, close to many governmental offices, has nearly a third of the parkers who came to conduct personal business. In aggregate, 1117 respondents came downtown to work and only one of the 71 respondents using the Union Station garage came downtown for a purpose other than work.

Table 5
Purpose for Downtown Trips by Garage

Garage	Responses	Work	Shop	Personal Business	Recreation
1 – Sears	90	79	1	8	-
2 – Madison-Wells	31	24	-	7	-
3 – 203 LaSalle	167	111	5	50	-
4 – Rush/Ohio	127	86	17	8	10
5 – Trader Towers	269	245	3	15	5
6 – South Loop	110	74	4	25	2
7 – IBM	86	77	-	9	-
8 – Wash/Frank	165	137	2	21	-
9 – Adams/Wabash	45	24	-	13	-
10 – Frank/Lake	202	190	-	6	6
11- Union Station	72	70	-	1	-
Total	1364	1117	32	164	23

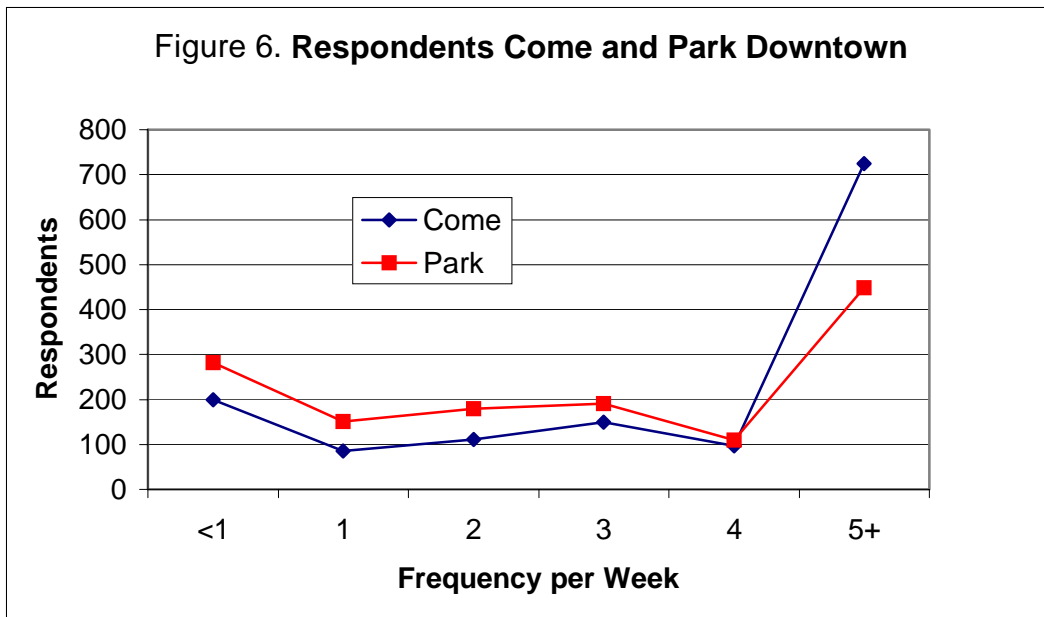
3. Parking Frequency

In addition to place of residence, the frequency of parking may also be assessed by the purpose for being downtown. The two most common purposes are work and personal business (Figure 5). As might be expected, respondents who came for personal business come infrequently, while those who came to work tend to park more frequently.



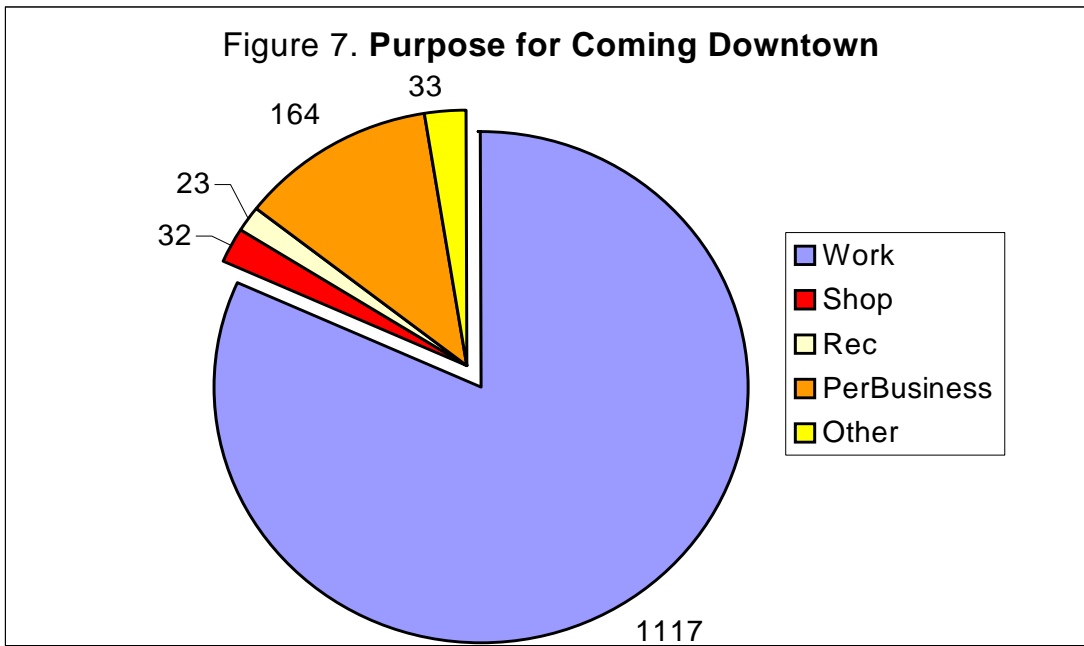
3.1 Frequency of Coming versus Parking Downtown

More than half (53%) of respondents come downtown at least five times a week (Figure 6). Of these people, 61% also park at least five times a week--about 40% of the time they do *not* park when they come downtown. This drops to approximately 33% for those who come downtown four times a week. Respondents who come downtown three times a week do not park 28% of the time. The conclusion is that those who are downtown most frequently are most likely to use other modes of transportation in accessing the downtown.



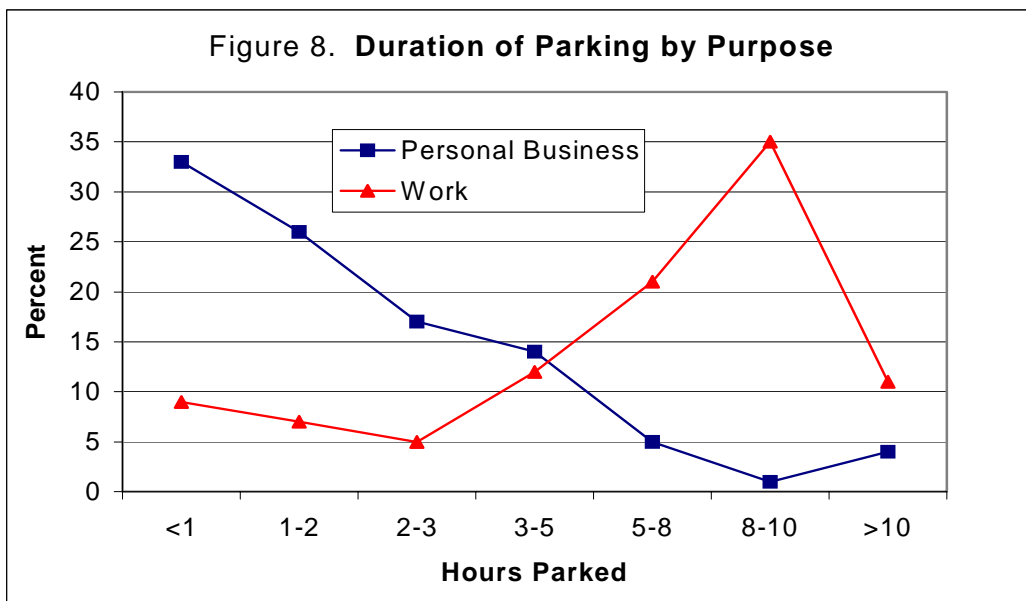
4. Purpose for Coming Downtown

The overwhelming purpose was work. 82% of the parkers came downtown to work and another 12% came to conduct personal business (Figure 7). Shopping and recreation together account for less than five percent or 55 of the respondents. Only the two most common purposes have sufficiently large responses to discuss in more detail in the following sections of this report.



Purpose for being downtown may also be examined by reviewing the duration of the parking experience. Those who come downtown for work park for more hours than for other purposes. Just over one-third park at least eight hours and another eleven percent park for more than ten hours (Figure 8). The decline in the first three data points, to the 2-3-hour level, suggests price awareness. Since parking rates tend to level off after two hours the additional cost of parking another hour is minor, partially accounting for the popularity of the 3-5 hour category over the 2-3-hour category.

Those who come downtown for personal business are most likely to park for short periods of time, with the exception of the longest time period, over ten hours. Approximately one-third park less than an hour and a total of 59% park for less than two hours.

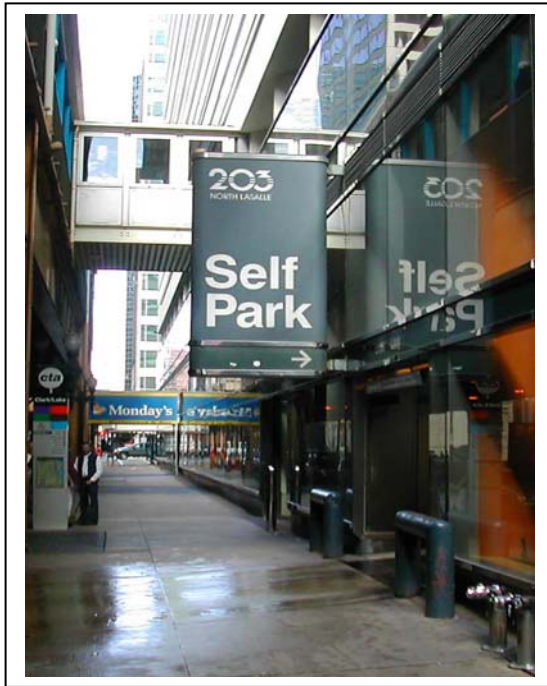


5. Summary of Data Analysis

The major findings in this study are the following:

- City of Chicago residents account for the largest portion of the downtown parkers (44%). In total Cook County accounts for a total of 70% of the parkers.
- Chicago residents account for 4% more total hours of parking than suburban residents.
- Chicago residents park 26 minutes longer, on average, than suburban residents.
- Chicago residents park on more days per week, on average, than suburban residents.
- The proportion of the parkers from the city of Chicago varies by garage.
- City of Chicago respondents park on more days per week than other respondents. 42% of the city residents park at least five times a week compared to 28% of suburban residents.
- Some city neighborhoods are disproportionately represented among downtown parkers, e.g., the far south side near 71st to 95th Streets and the near north side. The former area is largely minority with much of the area located more than a one-hour travel time to the downtown by public transit.
- The overwhelming proportion of parkers comes downtown to work (82%).
- Place of residence accounts for only minor differences in the purposes for downtown trips.
- Respondents who come downtown to work park for more hours and on more days per week than other respondents.

Part II. Data-Collection Method



1. Introduction

In late May and early June 2003 several thousand surveys were distributed to parkers in eleven downtown Chicago facilities. The multistory parking facilities ranged in size from 500 to 1200 spaces. A total of 1380 usable surveys were returned.

An analysis of the results indicates that 44% of the parkers reside in the city of Chicago. Since Chicago respondents parked for more hours and they also parked more frequently, they account for more parked hours than suburbanites.

2. Selection of Garages

An initial list of twelve downtown garages was developed. Only the Grant Park facility was deleted, principally due to the permissions required to conduct the survey and the potential delays that would cause.

We originally agreed to survey six to eight garages. Given the cooperation of the parking managers and the overriding emphasis on a large number of completed surveys we decided to survey all eleven garages. As a consequence, we did not strive for one hundred respondents at each garage, an early objective.

3. Locations

Eight of the eleven parking facilities surveyed are in the Loop, one is west of the River (Union Station) and two are north of the River (IBM Plaza and Rush & Ohio--Table 1). Each is a multi-story facility with at least 500 parking places.

Given the varied land-use patterns within the Chicago downtown, many of the facilities serve a special market. The Rush and Ohio facility is close to shopping on Michigan Avenue, the South Loop garage is close to federal offices and the 203 North LaSalle facility is conveniently located to state and city government offices.

Table 1
Parking Facilities Surveyed

Garage
1 – Sears Tower at Adams and Franklin
2 – NE corner of Madison and Wells
3 – 203 LaSalle Street (at Lake Street)
4 – Rush/Ohio/Wabash
5 – Trader Towers on South Franklin
6 – South Loop at 318 South Federal
7 – IBM Plaza on State Street
8 – NE corner of Washington and Franklin
9 – Adams and Wabash
10 – SW corner of Franklin and Lake
11 – Union Station on Canal Street*

*pictured below



4. The Survey

In the design of the survey the emphasis was on:

- Obtaining the most essential information
- Making the survey easy to read and understand
- Keeping it brief to maximize acceptance and completion and
- Printing it on heavy-stock paper so that it would be easy to handle and complete.

6. Incentives

Signs were posted in numerous locations in each garage to inform the parkers that their participation was requested. Elevators were the most common location. Both the knowledge that the survey was ongoing and that there was an incentive played a critical role in the success of the surveying effort.

Figure 2
Posted Signs Explaining Incentive

**ONE DOLLAR DISCOUNT
FOR COMPLETED SURVEYS
WHEN PAYING AT THE CASHIER**

Thank you for your participation



This extra effort was necessary since most respondents have been surveyed for a variety of reasons on several previous occasions and were originally reluctant to participate. Moreover, some garages have ongoing surveying efforts and this survey effort only added to the burden many parkers feel.

7. Cooperation by Parking Managers

The managers operating the facilities were instrumental in the success of this effort. They cooperated and communicated the importance of the survey to their personnel.



In several cases the incentives could not be arranged and this is reflected in the smaller number of returns at these garages. At these garages other efforts were made to have the parkers participate. We are grateful for the cooperation we received from the parking managers.

8. Summary of Data-Collection Method

With an early objective of 800 to 1000 usable surveys, the final tally of 1380 surveys speaks to the success of this effort. We can analyze the results in ways that would not have been possible with smaller numbers of responses.

The participation of all concerned is greatly appreciated and without their assistance we could not have been successful. The incentive arrangement was an additional burden for all parking managers as were many other aspects of this survey. We now know that the effort was worthwhile and the returns exceeded our initial expectations.