PARKING PUBLIC

HOLLYWOOD
GUIDE
2007

temporary travel office

This mini-booklet is a brief and incomplete guide to consider the space of parking in and around Hollywood's Entertainment District. It is not a manual on how to find parking in Hollywood. Nor is it a technical or historical account of parking.

So what exactly is it?

The Temporary Travel Office has been producing guided tours of public parking around the United States since 2005 in an effort to understand its role in how our cities and towns are shaped - and hence, how relationships between citizens are shaped.

While this plays out somewhat differently in different cities and regions, certain trends are visibly woven through these disparate narratives.

For our 2007 tour of Hollywood, we focus on the ***front*** and ***back*** spaces of the area, where *front* and *back* denote what is public and what is private and whom is meant to occupy either.

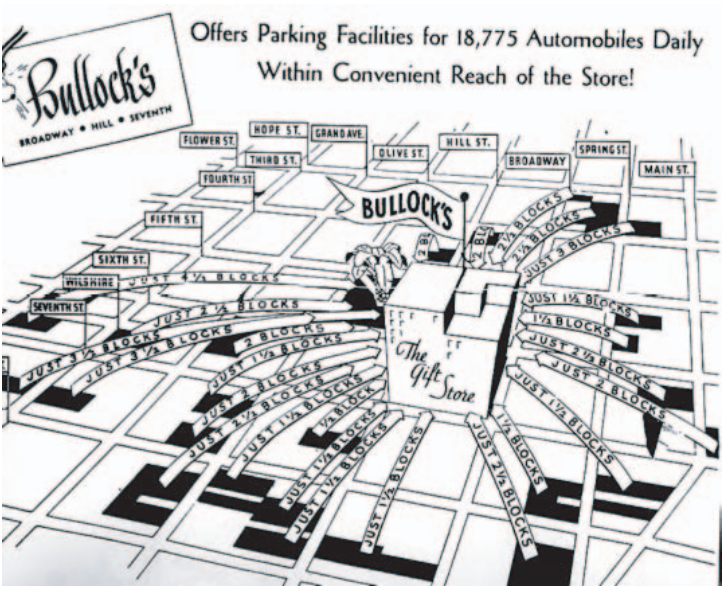
This guide book accompanies a guided tour, but can be used to direct oneself, using the basic information and map provided. We have also included an abbreviated bibliography for future reference.

While parking is probably most thought of as a late 20th Century phenomenon, the struggle to deal with stationary automobiles had been felt before mid century. As early as 1920, the city of Los Angeles struggled with gridlock in its downtown business district, and banned parking in its urban core. The ban, however, was quickly repealed after the city was overtaken by outraged motorists and their vehicles. But the story of parking is not to be told as one solely about "America's love for its cars" or our national pride in individual speed, mobility, and horizontality.

Even before the circulatory highway system and suburbanization that followed WW II, parking was seen as an issue that could make or break cities. During the Great Depression the country's urban cores struggled. In that era of New Deals and government solutions, business leaders called on local governments to intervene in the form of parking solutions. As early as 1930, the city of Kalamazoo, Michigan would pioneer the development of municipal parking lots. Cities, and their politicians, needed to keep their downtowns economically vital, as they were a prime source of the tax revenue, then helping to fund modernization projects and civil services. The zoning regulations of the 1920s would help organize the expanding mobility and mass of capital. By 1942, one of five cities with populations over 10,000 would operate municipal downtown parking lots, most of them being

free. Municipal lots were not limited to the pre-war economic crisis. With the development of the Highway Act, federal housing subsidies, and suburban malls, the threats to the welfare of urban business districts continued. Cities found municipal lots one way to retain the tax dollars that were relocating to outlying shopping centers offering cheap real estate, fewer zoning and labor regulations and large expansive parking lots.

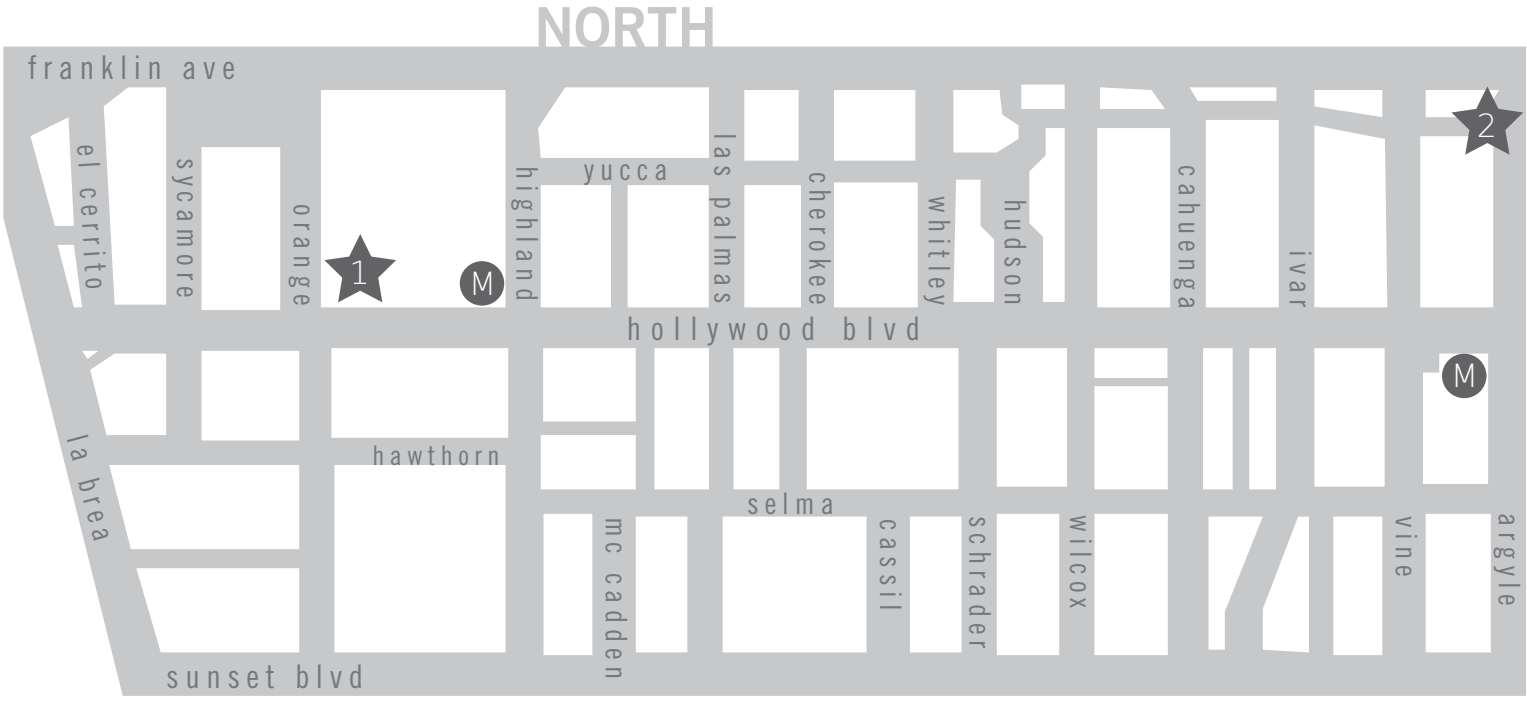
But parking's history is not over... as urban desires and needs are being reshaped, so are the spaces we have known as parking lots.



The days of empty urban parking lots, designed to serve only 85% of their potential capacity, seem to be coming to a close. In their place are the more lucrative ventures serving the new urban needs of office parks and luxury condos. For many, this is progress. New Urbanists, have long derided the “simple landscape” of parking lots as an ugly waste of space at best. But even worse than their aesthetic crimes, are their economic ones, according to some, like UCLA urban planning scholar Donald Shoup. The requirement that commercial and residential buildings require off-street parking in many cities represents a public subsidy of “free” parking in the neighborhood of $374 billion per year. The costs of free, or cheap, parking are hidden in higher housing costs, higher taxes, and environmental degradation. By valuing parking at rates based on supply and demand, Shoup figures that the market can solve the problems created by decades of urban planning policies.

In the early 16th Century, Sir Thomas More wrote in his famed text Utopia that the fictional citizens considered wasted land a “just cause of war, for a nation to hinder others from possessing a part of that soil, of which they make no use, but which is suffered to lie idle and uncultivated.” The connection between land use, utopian desires and conflict seem as present in today’s reality as in his pre-modern fiction. Through his account of “Drosscapes,” Alan Berger argues that contemporary conflicts over land use are essentially battles over waste. As Berger notes, urban life and waste are inseparable, it’s the different interpretations of waste, the different utopian visions, that generate the conflict.

The Hollywood Entertainment District is what is known as a Business Improvement District and encompasses an 18 linear block area that is commonly referred to as Hollywood. Begun in 1996, it is now composed of 165 property owners and operates a budget of more than $2 million for security, marketing and beautification projects, contracting private security firms like Andrew International and custodial services like Clean Street. Presidents of the Board of Directors have included some of the most powerful developers in the area such as Steve Ullman of Grant Parking and currently, Monica Yamada of the CIM Group. It is authorized by the Los Angeles City Council until the end of 2008.



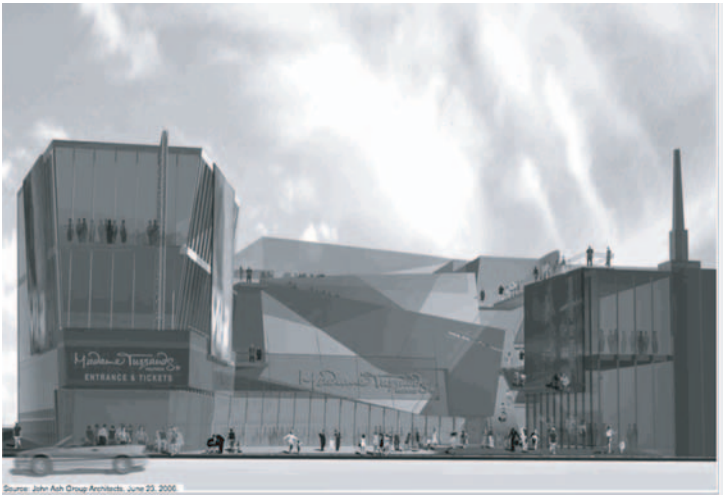
stop 1: NE corner of Hollywood/Orange

stop 2: NW intersection of Argyle/Yucca

Stop 1 (a)

This site, currently under construction, is a former Grant Parking surface lot with approx 89 parking spaces. The land is owned by Hollywood Orange Land, LLC, a company affiliated with Steve Ullman, also the owner of Grant Parking, the largest parking operator in the Hollywood area. This site has also served as a pick up, drop off and sales hub for Hollywood sightseeing tours.

image from the Temporary Travel Office archives (2005)



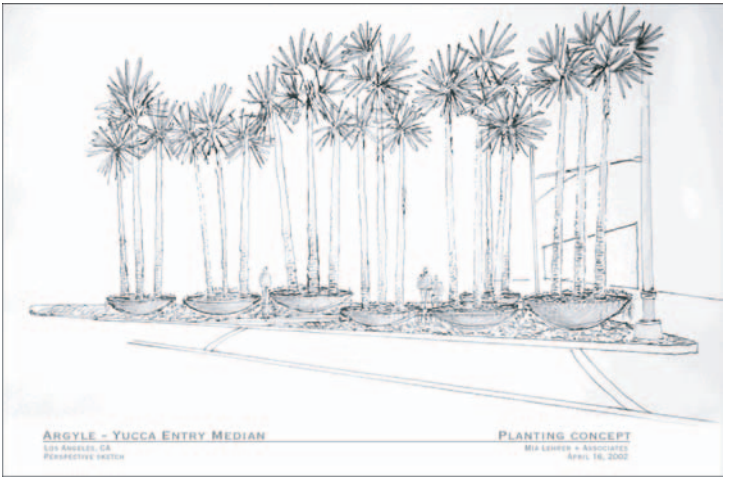
Stop 1 (b)

This former surface parking lot is currently undergoing transformation into a much different kind of structure. It will now be a three story building housing retail and a $55 million Madame Tussauds, a wax museum that will feature interactive and rotating celebrity themed exhibits. The building will still have a substantial parking presence, only it will be a two-level underground facility with at least 94 spaces. The redevelopment of this site has been in planning since 1997, with several changes along the way.

Image source: John Ash Group Architects, June 23, 2006.

Stop 2 (a)

The traffic triangle at the NW intersection of Yucca/Argyle is currently the target of redevelopment efforts of the Argyle Civic Association, one of several neighborhood organizations operating in Hollywood. The ACA was founded in the early 1990s and achieved non-profit status in 1995. Issues addressed by the ACA are focused on the aesthetic maintenance and quality of their neighborhood, including keeping trash off the street, sterilizing pigeons and keeping undesirable people to a minimum.
Image source: Argyle Civic Association website



Stop 2 (b)

As part of the ACA's attempt to promote the "renaissance" of Hollywood, they have commissioned a beautification proposal for the concrete triangle by Mia Lehrer & Associates that would include large planters and Mexican Fan Palms. The $80,000 project has already received substantial support from Capital Records and matching grants from the LA Bureau of Public Works.

Successful projects by the ACA to date include increasing parking on part of Argyle by 30% through restriping space as diagonal rather than parallel

Image source: Mia Lehrer & Associates, via Argyle Civic Association

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This guided tour was produced by the Temporary Travel Office in conjunction with Just Space(s), organized by Nicholas Brown and Ava Bromberg for Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions. www.justspaces.org

The tour was conducted by Ryan Griffis and Claude Willey on November 9, 2007.