



Downtown parking a continuing concern for core area parking district project (Staff photo)

1-8-79

Downtown parking district slowly becoming reality

Maricarrol Kueter
Staff Writer

The road to the establishment of a downtown parking district is slowly being paved in Rapid City.

The idea for a public parking district in the downtown area was not new when the Rapid City Common Council passed the resolution creating the district in January 1978.

Several attempts by downtown businessmen and city officials to get the project going were thwarted for a variety of reasons, according to Public Works Director Leonard Swanson. He credits the opening of Rushmore Mall with getting the project launched.

The plan includes acquiring land and improving parking facilities in the downtown core area from Fourth

Followup

Street to Ninth Street and from the alley south of St. Joseph Street to the alley north of Main Street.

Two lots, a vacant lot on the corner of Mount Rushmore Road and Main Street also known as the Patton lot, and the lot where the Continental Trailways Bus Station is on Sixth Street, have already been bought by the city.

Resurfacing of the Patton lot is scheduled for bid letting in the spring, according to Swanson. Work on the bus station lot should begin by next fall, after arrangements for relocating the station are completed, Swanson said.

A problem in the completion of the project is the acquisition of the land between the Sears building and Sixth Street. Property owners there and the city have not agreed on a selling price for the parcel, Swanson said.

He said if an agreement is not reached soon, the problem will be brought before the council to see if the city will continue attempts to buy the land or go through condemnation proceedings.

The parking district plans also include parking lot construction by the owners of the land in the 700 and 800 blocks of Main Street on land adjacent to their proposed buildings. Swanson said the project includes making the land available to the businesses for the lots. He said the city has acquired one

of the pieces of land and is negotiating on the other.

The parking district also includes improvements to be made on existing lots at the intersection of Sixth and St. Joseph Street and east of the Stockgrowers Building on St. Joseph Street.

Financing for the parking project has been through the sale of special assessment bonds which property owners will pay off over 10 years.

A total of \$500,000 toward the project's \$1.9 million cost will be raised from the assessments with most of the remainder coming from federal funds.

The parking district will add 214 parking spaces when completed.