Fieldwork: University City Parking Inventory

My primary project at the PCPC was to prepare the basis for a parking inventory that will be performed in University City in Spring 2017. Every 5 years, the Planning Commission releases a parking inventory for Center City. As University City further develops and becomes a second central business district, it will be more vital to understand its parking situation in order to adapt and recommend best practices. In 2017, the first University City inventory will be performed and published. I worked closely with David Kanthor to put together the background for the study. Through my research and implementation, I learned about the ways in which parking affects neighborhoods and communities. I learned a lot about the University City area, university and medical districts in general, and parking. I created the maps to the right as a baseline for the study.

Learning and Implementation

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UC Facilities

My most important task was to locate and map all existing facilities. For this inventory, we only consider off-street publicly accessible lots of 30 spaces or more. I also defined the study area and outlined sub-districts based on boundaries.

Specific responsibilities at the Field Site:

- Collected background information on best practices from other cities with similar districts
- Formal definition of the study area
- Inventory of existing parking facilities and stakeholders in those facilities
- GIS-made layers of existing facilities and parcels
- Possible technologies that would streamline the inventory process and also preserve accuracy (Aerial mapping)
- Other projects
  - Helped to update the 2016 Trail List
  - Wrote memos on meetings, notes, and applications
  - Attended meetings

I took a GIS class this semester, so I expected to incorporate those skills in my fieldwork. However, in order to create layers of existing facilities, I was forced to learn concepts that we have not touched in class. With assistance from my supervisor and members of the GIS division at my field site, I learned to geocode addresses, create parcel maps, and more. The images above represent the layers I created.

Reflection

Learning goals:

- Developed a better understanding of parking practices and transportation planning.
- Gained experience in planning through exposure to a city planning office.
- Improved my research, analysis and GIS skills, and put together the background for the UC inventory.