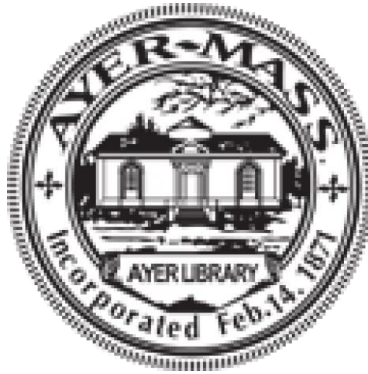




## **EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT**

### **Parking Demand Management Program Ayer, MA**



**NOVEMBER 2017**

**Prepared for:**

**Town of Ayer  
1 Main Street  
Ayer, MA 01432**

**Prepared by:**





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## **1.0 Introduction**

WorldTech Engineering was retained by the Town of Ayer to conduct a study that will result in the development of a Parking Demand Management Program (PDMP). The primary purpose of the program is to address the ever growing need of parking in the Central Business District for residents, business patrons, commuters on the MTBA Fitchburg Rail Line. The PDMP was also initiated to aid in promoting economic growth in this area of Town and to reduce traffic and parking impacts on nearby residential neighborhoods. Meetings were held with key stakeholders from the Town in order to establish goals regarding the parking study.

The goals of the study include developing strategies to manage parking through pricing, regulation, and optimization of parking supply; using maps and wayfinding to manage parking supply and pricing; and establishing a program that will encourage additional business and residential development in downtown Ayer as well as enhance the climate for existing businesses and residents.

This Evaluation and Recommendations Report summarizes the data collection, analysis, and results of the existing conditions study and presents preliminary recommendations for managing parking in downtown Ayer.



## **2.0 Existing Conditions**

This section summarizes the study approach, data collection, and parking utilization data collected in the study.

### **2.1 Project Purpose and Need**

The Town of Ayer is a predominantly suburban community with a population of approximately 7,500 and a land area of approximately 9.5 square miles. State Routes 2A and 111 pass through Ayer's downtown, and interchanges with Route 2 and Interstate 495 are located 2 miles and 5 miles from downtown, respectively, making the downtown business district an attractive destination for surrounding communities. In addition, there is an MBTA commuter rail station located in downtown Ayer, attracting approximately 435 inbound riders per day based on 2013 passenger counts. However, there is a lack of suitable parking management in the downtown core, resulting in MBTA commuters occupying on-street spaces, at the expense of residents and the customers and employees of downtown businesses. The Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) plan to construct a paid commuter garage on the site of the existing free Nashua River Trail parking lot introduces new challenges to the Town, as commuters may seek to find free on- and off-street parking options once the garage opens. Accommodating displaced commuter parking will also be a challenge for the Town during construction of the new MART facility.

A lack of wayfinding to available parking also contributes to a perception of insufficient parking and leads to over-parking along Main Street, with vehicles illegally parked too close to intersections and crosswalks, while nearby streets and parking lots have available spaces. The approximate time to walk from one end of the compact downtown business district to the other is approximately ten minutes, placing this underutilized parking well within a short walk from most downtown destinations.

### **2.2 Previous Studies**

This study builds on prior work done to identify parking issues and develop solutions in downtown Ayer. Additional documents referenced throughout the study process included:

- *Ayer Transit Parking Study Report*, The Cecil Group, October 2005
- *Town of Ayer Parking Workshop*, Eaton Planning, May 2007
- *Traffic Calming, Circulation and Access Report, Downtown Area and School Zones*, Weston & Sampson, February 2009
- *Ayer Parking Garage Impact Analysis*, Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), December 2009



## 2.3 Study Area Description

The study area includes the downtown core, bounded roughly by Park Street on the west, the MBTA Fitchburg Line on the south, Columbia Street on the east, and Cambridge Street on the north. In addition, the study area extends north along Lawton Street to Groton Street, and east along Central Avenue to Norwood Street. Data collection included all on-street parking within these limits, as well as publicly accessible off-street parking. The study area and ownership of each off-street facility is depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1 – Study Area





## **2.4 Parking Restrictions**

### **2.4.1 On-Street Parking**

Within the study area, on-street parking is restricted to two hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on the following streets:

- Main Street, both side, Park Street to Columbia Street
- West Street, west side, Main Street to #20
- Pleasant Street, west side, Main Street to #10
- Washington Street, east side, Main Street to Cambridge Street
- Columbia Street, west side, Main Street to Newton Street

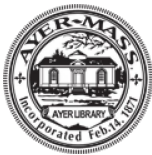
In addition, the south side of Central Avenue from Columbia Street to Norwood Street is restricted to two-hour parking from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., except the segment opposite the commercial buildings at 8-14 Central Avenue which is restricted to two-hour parking from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The north side of Central Avenue is unregulated, as are both sides of Newton Street; both sides of Columbia Street north of Newton Street; Cambridge Street; the west side of Pleasant Street north of #10; the east side of West Street; and the west side of West Street north of #20. It should be noted that although there are no posted parking restrictions along the east side of Pleasant Street, the roadway is too narrow to allow for parked vehicles on both sides of the street.

### **2.4.2 On-Street Parking**

Within the study area, on-street parking is restricted to two hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on the following streets:

- Main Street, both side, Park Street to Columbia Street
- West Street, west side, Main Street to #20
- Pleasant Street, west side, Main Street to #10
- Washington Street, east side, Main Street to Cambridge Street
- Columbia Street, west side, Main Street to Newton Street

In addition, the south side of Central Avenue from Columbia Street to Norwood Street is restricted to two-hour parking from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., except the segment opposite the commercial buildings at 8-14 Central Avenue which is restricted to two-hour parking from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The north side of Central Avenue is unregulated, as are both sides of Newton Street; both sides of Columbia Street north of Newton Street; Cambridge Street; the west side of Pleasant Street north of #10; the east side of West Street; and the west side of West Street north of #20. It should be noted that although there are no posted parking restrictions along the east side of Pleasant Street, the roadway is too narrow to allow for parked vehicles on both sides of the street. On-street parking regulations are depicted in Figure 2.



### 2.4.3 Off-Street Parking

The study area includes 12 off-street parking lots with a total of 449 spaces. Each of these lots is privately owned and restricted to individual businesses, with two exceptions – the 20-space 0 Park Street lot, and the 80-space Nashua River Rail Trail lot. The remaining lots in the study area are privately owned, and parking is restricted to individual businesses properties. The location of each off-street lot is also shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 – Parking Restrictions

The off-street parking lots included in the study are as follows:

1. Nashua River Rail Trail (Public, 80 spaces)
2. 0 Park Street (Public, 20 spaces)
3. 21 Park Street (Private, 12 spaces)
4. Santander Bank, 1 Park Street (Private, 18 spaces)
5. Verizon, 26 Pleasant Street (Private, 33 spaces)
6. Page-Moore Building, rear of 31-47 Main Street (Private, 50 spaces)



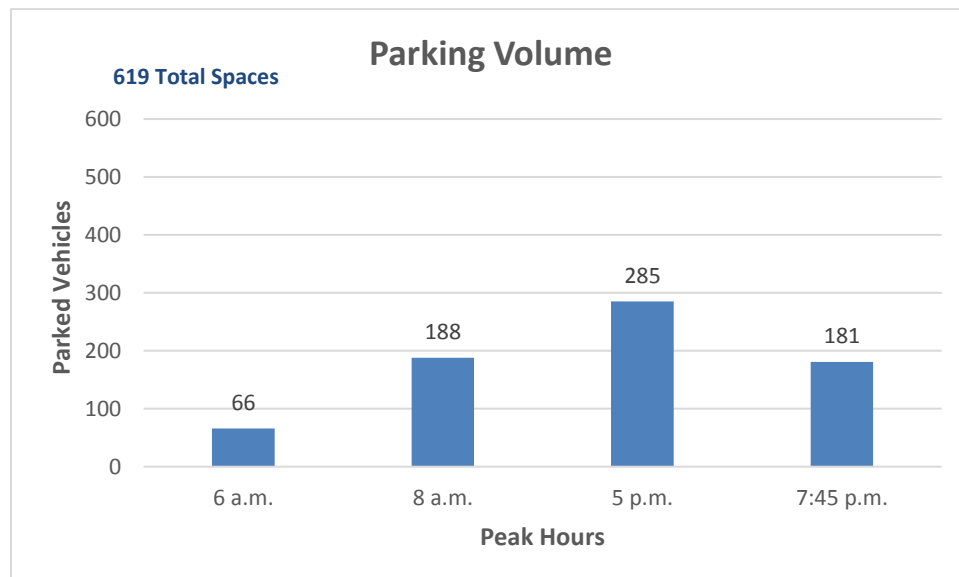
7. Kevin M. Brown & Associates, DMD, 9 Pleasant Street (Private, 10 spaces)
8. Depot Square, (Private, 106 spaces)
9. Main Street Bank, rear of 7 Main Street (Private, 64 spaces)
10. Main Street Bank secondary lot, 12 Newton Street (Private, 6 spaces)
11. Town Hall (rear of 1 Main Street, 12 spaces)
12. 0 Newton Street (Private, 32 spaces)

## **2.5 Study Methodology**

Parking occupancy along each roadway and off-street parking lot depicted in Figure 2 was obtained at four times of day on December 7 and 8, 2016: 6:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m., and 7:45 p.m. License plates of vehicles parked in each space were recorded and matched to determine the approximate duration of occupancy. Vehicles arriving between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. and departing between 5:00 and 7:45 p.m. were assumed to be MBTA commuters.

## **2.6 Summary of Findings**

Figure 3 below summarizes the total number of vehicles parked by time of day, while Table 1 on the following page gives a detailed analysis of each facility, including the occupancy of each street segment and off-street lot during each time period, as well as the number of vehicles remaining in the same space all day (from before 6:00 a.m. until after 7:45 p.m.) and the number of vehicles arriving between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. and leaving between 5:00 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. (likely commuters).



*Figure 3 – Parking Volume by Time of Day*





Town of Ayer – Parking Demand Management Program  
Evaluation and Recommendations Report

Table 1 – Parking Occupancy by Facility and Time of Day

Off-Street Parking		Spaces	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	5:00 p.m.	7:45 p.m.	All Day Occupancy	8am - 5pm Occupancy
1	Rail Trail Lot	80	25 (31%)	63 (79%)	61 (76%)	6 (8%)	3 (6%)	37 (46%)
2	0 Park Street Lot	20	2 (10%)	18 (90%)	15 (75%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	13 (65%)
3	21 Park Street Lot	12	0	0	6 (50%)	2 (17%)	0	0
4	Santander Bank	18	0	0	4 (22%)	0	0	0
5	Verizon	33	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	0	0
6	Page-Moore Building	50	2 (4%)	6 (12%)	16 (32%)	41 (82%)	0	0
7	Dentist	16	0	0	10 (63%)	5 (31%)	0	0
8	Depot Square	106	3 (3%)	28 (26%)	57 (54%)	32 (30%)	2 (2%)	20 (19%)
9	Main Street Bank - Main	64	19 (30%)	39 (61%)	31 (48%)	16 (25%)	7 (11%)	15 (23%)
10	Main Street Bank - Secondary	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Town Hall	12	1 (8%)	5 (42%)	4 (33%)	1 (8%)	0	0
12	0 Newton Street Lot	32	10 (31%)	14 (44%)	16 (50%)	14 (44%)	1 (3%)	7 (22%)
Total Off-Street Spaces Occupied			64	181	224	122	14	92
% Occupied			14%	40%	50%	27%	3%	20%
Spaces Available		449	385	268	225	327	435	357
On-Street Parking		Spaces	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	5:00 p.m.	7:45 p.m.	All Day Occupancy	8am - 5pm Occupancy
Lawton St (west side)		18	0	0	6 (33%)	1 (6%)	0	0
Pleasant St, Cambridge St to Main St		19	0	0	7 (37%)	6 (16%)	0	0
West St		8	1 (13%)	0	9 (113%)	2 (25%)	0	0
Newton St		9	0	6 (67%)	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	0	5 (56%)
Cambridge St		20	0	0	2 (10%)	0	0	0
Washington St		15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia St (west side)		18	0	0	2 (11%)	5 (28%)	0	0
Main St (Columbia St to Park St)		25	1 (4%)	0	12 (48%)	27 (108%)	0	0
Central Ave (Columbia St to Norwood St)		38	0	1 (3%)	15 (39%)	17 (45%)	0	0
Total On-Street Spaces Occupied			2	7	61	59	0	5
% Occupied			1%	4%	36%	35%	0%	3%
Spaces Available		170	168	163	109	111	170	165
TOTAL Off-Street and On-Street Parking		Spaces	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	5:00 p.m.	7:45 p.m.	All Day Occupancy	8am - 5pm Occupancy
Total Spaces Occupied			66	188	285	181	14	97
% Occupied			11%	30%	46%	29%	2%	16%
Spaces Available		619	553	431	334	438	605	522



The total number of spaces available for on-street segments includes legal parking spaces, allowing for sufficient distance from intersections, crosswalks, and hydrants. An occupancy of greater than 100 percent indicates that vehicles are parked illegally.

#### **2.6.1 Parking occupancy at 6:00 a.m.**

As shown in Figure 3, the total demand at 6:00 a.m. is only 66 vehicles. Most vehicles parked at that time were found in the Rail Trail lot, Main Street Bank's main lot, or 0 Newton Street, which were each about one third full. Only two vehicles were parked on the street at 6:00 a.m. in the study area.

#### **2.6.2 Parking occupancy at 8:00 a.m.**

Total occupancy in the study area at 8:00 a.m. was found to be 431 vehicles, or 30 percent. The majority of these vehicles were parked in the Rail Trail and 0 Park Street lots, which were 79 and 90 percent occupied, respectively. In addition, on-street parking on Newton Street, which is unregulated, was found to be 67 percent occupied. These observations are consistent with commuters arriving and finding unregulated parking prior to catching an inbound train.

In addition, the privately-owned Main Street Bank main lot was found to be 61 percent occupied, while the Town Hall employee lot and 0 Newton Street were just under half full. All other off-street lots were underutilized, including the 106 space privately-owned lot at Depot Square. With the exception of the unregulated spaces on Newton Street, only one vehicle was parked on-street at 8:00 a.m.

#### **2.6.3 Parking occupancy at 5:00 p.m.**

As shown in Figure 3, the peak parking demand occurred at 5:00 p.m., which includes overlap between commuters who have not yet returned, customers and employees of downtown businesses, and patrons of restaurants and entertainment venues. As shown in the figure, the total parking demand of 285 spaces is far below the supply of 619 spaces in the study. As shown in Table 1, off-street parking was overall 50 percent utilized, with vehicles spread out among each facility. The Rail Trail and 0 Park Street lots were the most utilized (about 75 percent) due to the number of commuters using those facilities.

On-street parking at 5:00 p.m. was concentrated in only a handful of locations, with Newton Street 89 percent occupied and West Street accommodating one more vehicle than its safe capacity. Main Street was found to be about 50 percent utilized, while each additional street segment in the study area was under 40 percent utilized. No vehicles were parked on Washington Street.



#### **2.6.4 Parking occupancy at 7:45 p.m.**

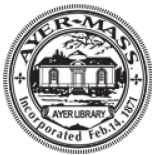
Total parking demand at 7:45 p.m. is similar to the demand at 8:00 a.m., with a total of 438 vehicles parked in the study area (29 percent of total capacity). However, the distribution of vehicles is drastically different from the morning observations. As shown in Table 1, the Page-Moore Building parking lot, which was underutilized throughout the day, was 82 percent occupied due to patrons of restaurants and The Billards Café. The 0 Newton Street lot was 44 percent occupied, while the Main Street Bank main lot, Depot Square, and the dentist's office were all approximately one quarter occupied. The remaining lots only had a handful of vehicles parked at 7:45 p.m.

On-street parking at 7:45 p.m. was concentrated on Main Street, where 27 vehicles occupied 25 legal spaces. The segment of Central Avenue between Columbia Street and Norwood Street was 45 percent occupied; no other on-street segment was used by more than a handful of vehicles. Despite being close to the area of high demand along Main Street, no vehicles were parked in the 15 spaces on Washington Street.

#### **2.6.5 Overall Observations**

The public Rail Trail and 0 Park Street lots are primarily used by commuters, with both lots heavily utilized at 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. About half the vehicles parked in the Rail Trail lot and nearly two-thirds of the vehicles parked in the 0 Park Street lot are commuters. The remaining off-street lots are typically 50 to 60 percent utilized during regular business hours. Notable exceptions are the 33-space Verizon lot at 26 Pleasant Street, the 18-space Santander Bank lot at 1 Park Street, and the 6-space secondary Main Street Bank lot at 12 Newton Street, which were mostly unoccupied during each time period analyzed.

The utilization of on-street parking appears to be highly dependent on regulations and location. Newton Street, which does not have time restrictions during the day, is occupied by commuters due to the lack of regulation. In the evening, when most downtown parking demand centers around restaurant and entertainment uses on Main Street, the parking demand is centered around Main Street, where more vehicles are parked than can be legally and safely accommodated. Other available on-street parking spaces - including 15 spaces on Washington Street, which is in close proximity to these uses - go unused at this time. Possible reasons for the lack of use of the available parking on Washington Street include poor wayfinding to indicate parking is available; a lack of willingness to walk to one's destination; or the narrow width of the roadway suggesting that parking is not permitted or that it would not be safe to park curbside.



## **2.7 Feedback from Businesses**

In addition to collecting parking occupancy data, a survey was sent to business owners in the study area in March 2017 to determine the concerns and needs of business owners, employees, and customers. Survey questions were:

- Where do you park?
- Where do your employees park?
- Where do your customers park?
- How could the walking experience in Downtown Ayer be improved?
- How can parking in Downtown Ayer be improved?

Only three surveys were returned. In general, the respondents and their employees have off-street parking, while customers park on the street. Concerns and recommendations noted included the following:

- Not enough parking for customers
- Commuters taking parking from customers
- Customers ticketed for two hour parking restriction
- Better lighting
- Wider sidewalks
- Increase parking supply

Survey responses are included in the Appendix.





## **3.0 Parking Strategies**

Using the parking occupancy data and survey responses, a series of strategies to improve parking demand management in the Downtown core was developed in conjunction with the Department of Public Works and Economic Development Office. This section summarizes potential improvements to manage downtown parking and recommended next steps. Table 2 at the conclusion of this section summarizes these potential improvements, the advantages and challenges to implementation, implementation steps, and recommendations.

### **3.1 Time Restricted Parking**

To prevent commuters from occupying on-street spaces, time restrictions should be consistent and applied to all street segments in the downtown core. Signs should be standardized and placed at regular intervals to clearly communicate parking regulations. Consideration should be given to establishing shorter-term parking spaces if individual businesses warrant higher turnover, and establishing longer term spaces on the periphery of downtown to prevent employees of downtown businesses from occupying close spaces best suited to customers.

Implementing time restrictions will require passing ordinances to enable enforcement, fabrication and installation of signs, and dedication of police resources for enforcement. Although time restrictions will encourage turnover and make close parking more available for customers of downtown businesses, some downtown shoppers may be discouraged due to the perception that they may be ticketed, as evidenced in the survey responses

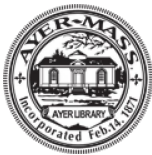
### **3.2 Metered Parking**

Metered parking encourages turnover and ensures that long term users, such as commuters and employees, do not occupy spaces which are convenient to customers of downtown businesses. However, charging for short term parking can be a deterrent to customers, particularly in a suburban community like Ayer where businesses with free parking are prevalent within a short driving distance. In addition, based on the field observations conducted for this study and on discussions with Town staff, the existing two-hour time restriction is generally respected, and enforcement has not been an issue. Therefore, metered on-street parking is not recommended.

Consideration should be given to implementing a parking kiosk at the O Park Street lot to provide long term parking for commuters and employees at a rate equal to the MART commuter lot.

### **3.3 Resident Permit Parking**

As noted above, commuters may seek to park on residential streets outside the downtown core if a daily fee for parking is implemented at the Rail Trail lot. To ensure parking is available to residents, a resident sticker program should be established for streets within a 5-10 minute walk of the commuter rail station. Implementation must include regular public outreach to ensure new tenants are aware of the program and



can easily participate. For ease of implementation and management, issuing permits on a calendar year basis is recommended.

### **3.4 Parking Supply**

As evidenced in the field observations, there is ample parking supply within the downtown core for today's uses. However, parked vehicles tend to be concentrated in a few locations at a given time, leaving some facilities over-parked while there is ample supply at other nearby facilities. The following strategies are recommended to improve the use of the existing parking supply:

- To take advantage of privately owned off-street parking lots which are underutilized at certain times of day, the Town should consider establishing shared parking agreements with business owners to maximize the use of these resources. A sample agreement is included in the Appendix.
- Provide wayfinding signage to direct drivers to available on-street and off-street parking. Signs should be of a consistent design and communicate time limits and location.
- To provide a safe environment on Main Street for pedestrians and vehicles, curb extensions should be constructed near crosswalks and intersections to ensure parked vehicles do not obstruct sight distance. Locations of mid-block crosswalks should be evaluated to provide safe crossings and maximize available parking. Individual parking spaces should be delineated with pavement markings to further communicate where it is legal to park.
- Consider providing additional parking along Central Avenue by restriping and marking angle parking spaces.
- Consider restriping Washington Street to delineate parking spaces along the east side of the street.
- Reduce the width of driveway openings in the study area to maximize available on-street parking, particularly on West Street.

### **3.5 Impacts of MART commuter lot construction**

All parking in the study area, and in the Town of Ayer as a whole, is currently free. However, this will soon change as MART proposes to construct a commuter parking facility on the site of the Nashua River Rail Trail lot with a daily fee for parking. This change may result in commuters finding free, unregulated on-street parking elsewhere in the downtown area, including the 0 Park Street lot, Newton Street, or other unregulated residential streets on the periphery of downtown.

The planned construction of a new commuter rail parking facility at the existing rail trail lot is estimated to begin in Spring 2018. Although construction phasing is not available at this time, construction of the facility will displace at least some, if not all, of the 80 existing parking spaces in the rail trail lot. To protect on-street parking for residents during this time, it is recommended that the Town implement a resident



permit parking program beginning in Calendar Year 2018. Similarly, signage for on-street time restrictions should be improved and extended to all street segments within the downtown core prior to the beginning of construction to ensure adequate parking is maintained for customers and employees of downtown businesses.

In addition to the above strategies, the Town should work with MART to ensure that displaced commuter parking is accommodated elsewhere, including remote parking areas and shuttle service to the Ayer station. The Town should also work with MART to promote the Devens Regional Shuttle and to expand public transit service in Ayer.



Table 2 – Summary of Parking Strategies

Strategy	Advantages	Challenges	Implementation	Recommendation
<b>Time Restrictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes turnover</li> <li>No user cost</li> <li>Manages commuter parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User inconvenience</li> <li>Enforcement and maintenance requirements</li> <li>Perception of being ticketed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fabricate and install signs</li> <li>Pass ordinance</li> <li>Enforcement</li> </ul>	Implement prior to MART lot construction
<b>Metered Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes turnover</li> <li>Revenue</li> <li>Manages commuter parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User cost and inconvenience</li> <li>Enforcement and maintenance requirements</li> <li>Impact on businesses</li> <li>Capital, maintenance, and enforcement costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install meters/kiosks</li> <li>Pass ordinance</li> <li>Enforcement</li> <li>Revenue collection</li> </ul>	<p>On-street: Not recommended</p> <p>Off-street: Implement in O Park Street lot when MART lot begins charging</p>
<b>Shared Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased parking supply</li> <li>User convenience</li> <li>Effective use of existing parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreements with private property owners</li> <li>Liability</li> <li>Responsibility for maintenance, enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach agreements with owners</li> <li>Establish design standards</li> <li>Install signs, make necessary capital improvements</li> </ul>	Meet with property owners to establish agreements and implementation procedure
<b>Resident Permit Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protects parking supply for residents</li> <li>Less “out of town” impact on local streets</li> <li>Manage commuter parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost – to Town and/or residents</li> <li>Responsibility for enforcement, administration</li> <li>Inconvenience for visitors, new tenants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign staff to administer program</li> <li>Issue permit stickers</li> <li>Public outreach</li> </ul>	Implement prior to MART lot construction – Calendar year 2018
<b>Wayfinding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective use of existing parking</li> <li>Better communicates parking regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital and maintenance cost</li> <li>Potential ADA issues on sidewalks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify parking locations</li> <li>Design, fabricate, and install signs</li> </ul>	Implement as part of Main Street TIP project
<b>Curb extensions, delineation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide safe sight distance at intersections</li> <li>Better manage on-street parking</li> <li>Shorten crosswalk lengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removes illegal “spaces” – appearance of reducing parking</li> <li>Capital cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate into roadway reconstruction program</li> </ul>	Implement as part of Main Street TIP project
<b>Reduce driveway openings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase on-street parking</li> <li>Improve pedestrian accommodations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconvenience/ pushback from property owners</li> <li>Capital cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate into roadway reconstruction program</li> </ul>	Implement as part of annual roadway/sidewalk program





## **4.0 Appendices**



## **4.1 Survey Responses**

Hir Salow



RECEIVED  
By psm Date 3/17/17

**Town of Ayer Parking Management Study  
February 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Town of Ayer is conducting a Downtown Parking Management Study. To help us better plan, design and accommodate the parking needs of Downtown Ayer businesses, residents and visitors, we request that you take a few minutes to answer the questions below:

Do you have off-street parking? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, how many spaces?

On a typical day,

Where do you park? I walk to work my employees

find a spot where ever they can find one. Sometimes  
someone will get a ticket for 2hr parking  
restrictions.

Where do your employees park? ↑

Where do your customers park? on the main street, at  
times they complain about parking.

How could the walking experience in Downtown Ayer be improved?

What are your primary concerns about parking?

We need to free  
up parking on side streets. Commuters  
need a place to park that may free up parking  
spots on side streets off Main St.

How can parking in Downtown Ayer be improved? More parking  
spots, lots or garage. A 2 or 3 level  
garage would be the best for everyone.

Thank you for your cooperation as we move forward with this important project!

Please return to:

Mark Wetzel, Superintendent  
Town of Ayer Department of Public Works  
25 Brook Street  
Ayer, MA 01432  
mwetzel@ayer.ma.us





**Town of Ayer Parking Management Study  
February 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Town of Ayer is conducting a Downtown Parking Management Study. To help us better plan, design and accommodate the parking needs of Downtown Ayer businesses, residents and visitors, we request that you take a few minutes to answer the questions below:

Do you have off-street parking? ☒ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many spaces? 5

On a typical day,

Where do you park? LOT OUT BACK

\_\_\_\_\_

Where do your employees park? LOT OUT BACK

\_\_\_\_\_

Where do your customers park? STREET OUT FRONT

\_\_\_\_\_

How could the walking experience in Downtown Ayer be improved?

BETTER LIGHTING - WIDER SIDE WALK ON NORTH SIDE  
ALL STORE OWNERS HELP TO KEEP DOWNTOWN CLEAN

What are your primary concerns about parking? NOT ENOUGH FOR

CUSTOMERS

\_\_\_\_\_

How can parking in Downtown Ayer be improved? ADD more Parking  
Entrances on ST or in Lots for Downtown use

---

Thank you for your cooperation as we move forward with this important project!

Please return to:

Mark Wetzel, Superintendent  
Town of Ayer Department of Public Works  
25 Brook Street  
Ayer, MA 01432  
mwetzel@ayer.ma.us

Marys Hair Salon

TOWN OF AYER  
SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

MAR 1 - 2017

RECEIVED



**Town of Ayer Parking Management Study  
February 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Town of Ayer is conducting a Downtown Parking Management Study. To help us better plan, design and accommodate the parking needs of Downtown Ayer businesses, residents and visitors, we request that you take a few minutes to answer the questions below:

Do you have off-street parking? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many spaces?

On a typical day,

Where do you park? NEXT TO RAIL TRACKS  
MY CUSTOMERS PARK THERE ALSO.

Where do your employees park? NO EMPLOYEES

Where do your customers park? NEXT TO RAIL TRACKS  
SOMETIMES ON MAIN ST.

How could the walking experience in Downtown Ayer be improved?

FLASHING LIGHTS AT CROSS WALKS.

What are your primary concerns about parking? MY CUSTOMERS  
NOT FINDING PARKING IN REAR OR  
ON STREET.

Marys Hair Salon

How can parking in Downtown Ayer be improved? NEED MORE  
PARKING FOR TRAIN RIDERS. MAYBE  
A PARKING GARAGE FOR A SMALL CHARGE.

Thank you for your cooperation as we move forward with this important project!

The Town

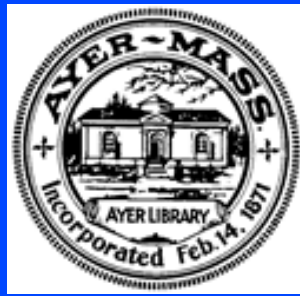
Please return to:

Mark Wetzel, Superintendent  
Town of Ayer Department of Public Works  
25 Brook Street  
Ayer, MA 01432  
mwetzel@ayer.ma.us





#### **4.2 Presentation to Board of Selectmen, March 23, 2017**



## Project Update

# Downtown Parking Management Study

March 23, 2017



## ***PROJECT GOALS***

- Manage parking through optimization, pricing, regulation and the phased supply of parking spaces
- Designate specific on-street and off-street parking regulations and pricing on area maps
- Identify necessary signs and locations
- Include a phased implementation timeline and monitoring plan
- Establish a parking management program that will encourage investment in Ayer, encourage additional residential development, and enhance the business climate.





# STUDY AREA



# ***PARKING ISSUES***

- Lack of Town owned lot(s)
- Commuter parking on residential streets
- Lack of parking for business employees
- Winter off street parking
- Main Street parking too close to side street intersections and crosswalks



## ***THE MART LOT***

- Primarily for commuters and rail trail users
- Will impact other town parking due to:

- Cost
- Convenience
- Access
- Habits



- Parking strategies and regulations should consider these potential impacts



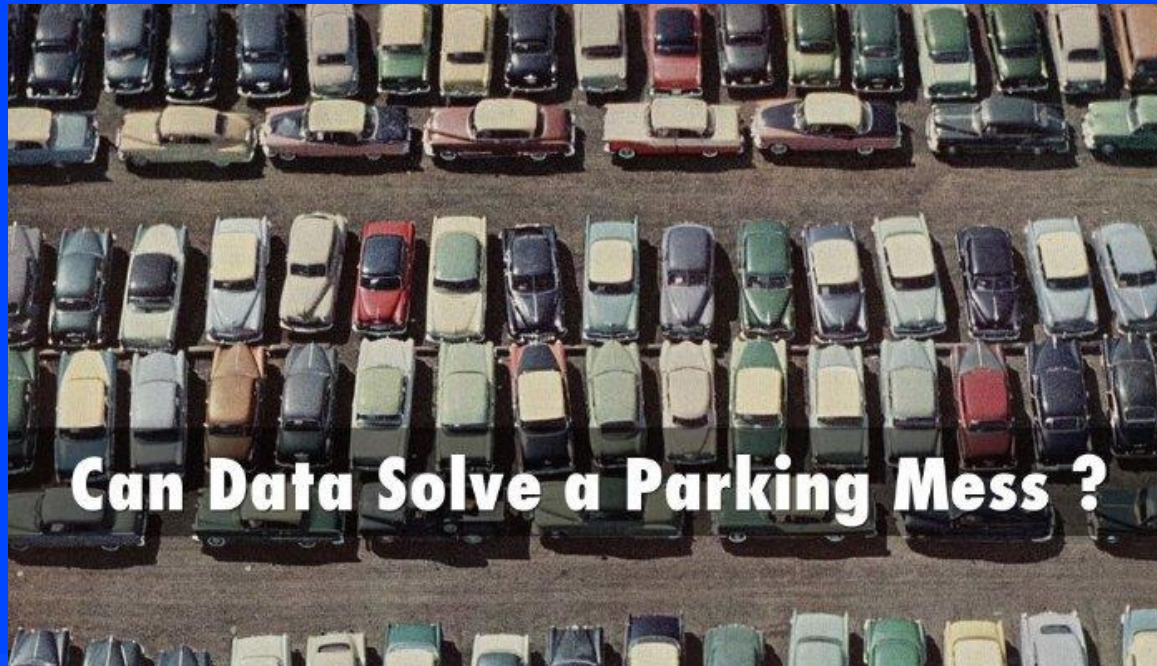


# ***METHODOLOGY***

- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Survey to Business Community
- Meet with Property Owners
- Develop Recommendations
- Strategies for regulating Commuter Parking
- Review by Town Officials and Ayer Police Dept.
- Implementation

# ***DATA COLLECTION***

- Field Surveys at 6:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.
- Determine where different user groups are parking and for how long

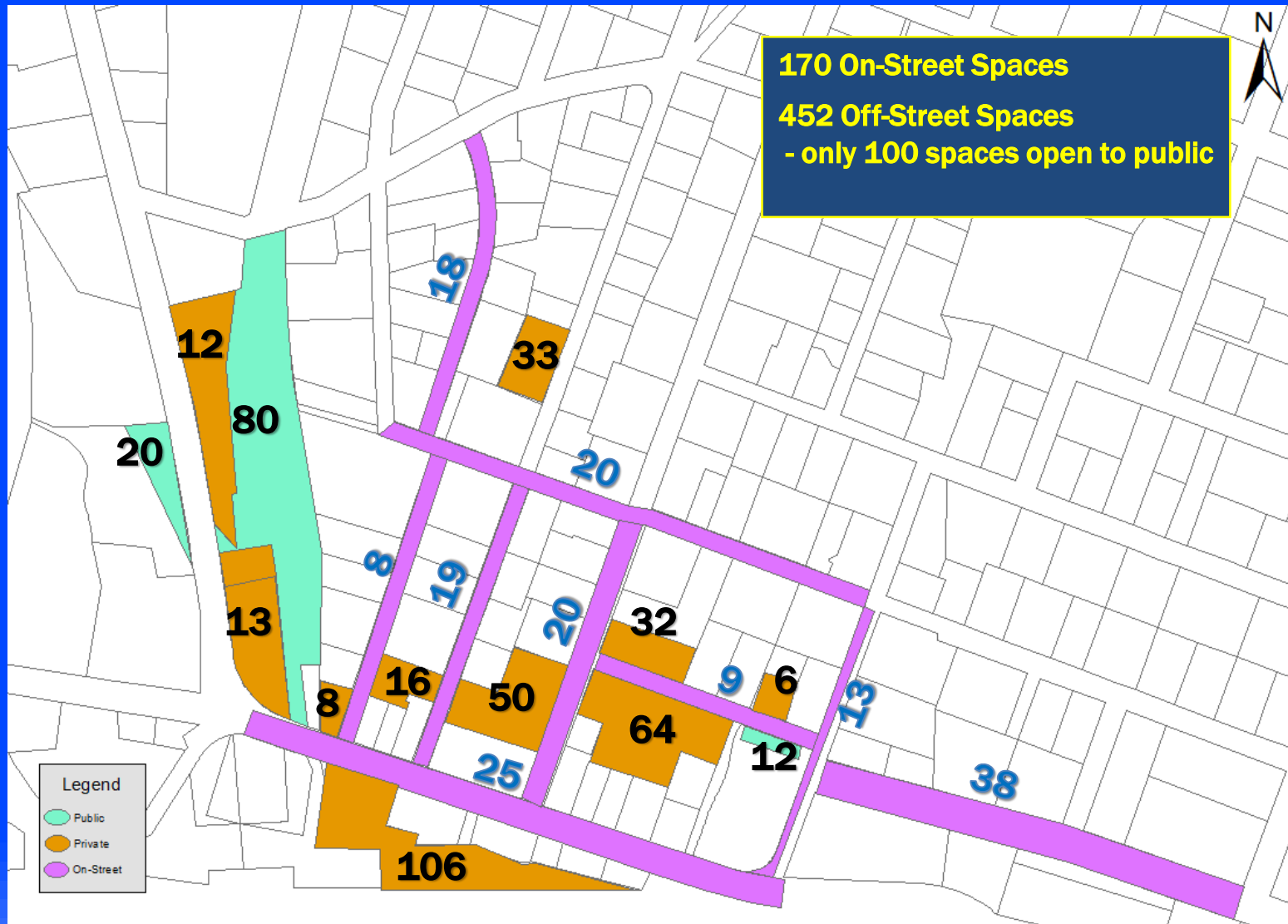




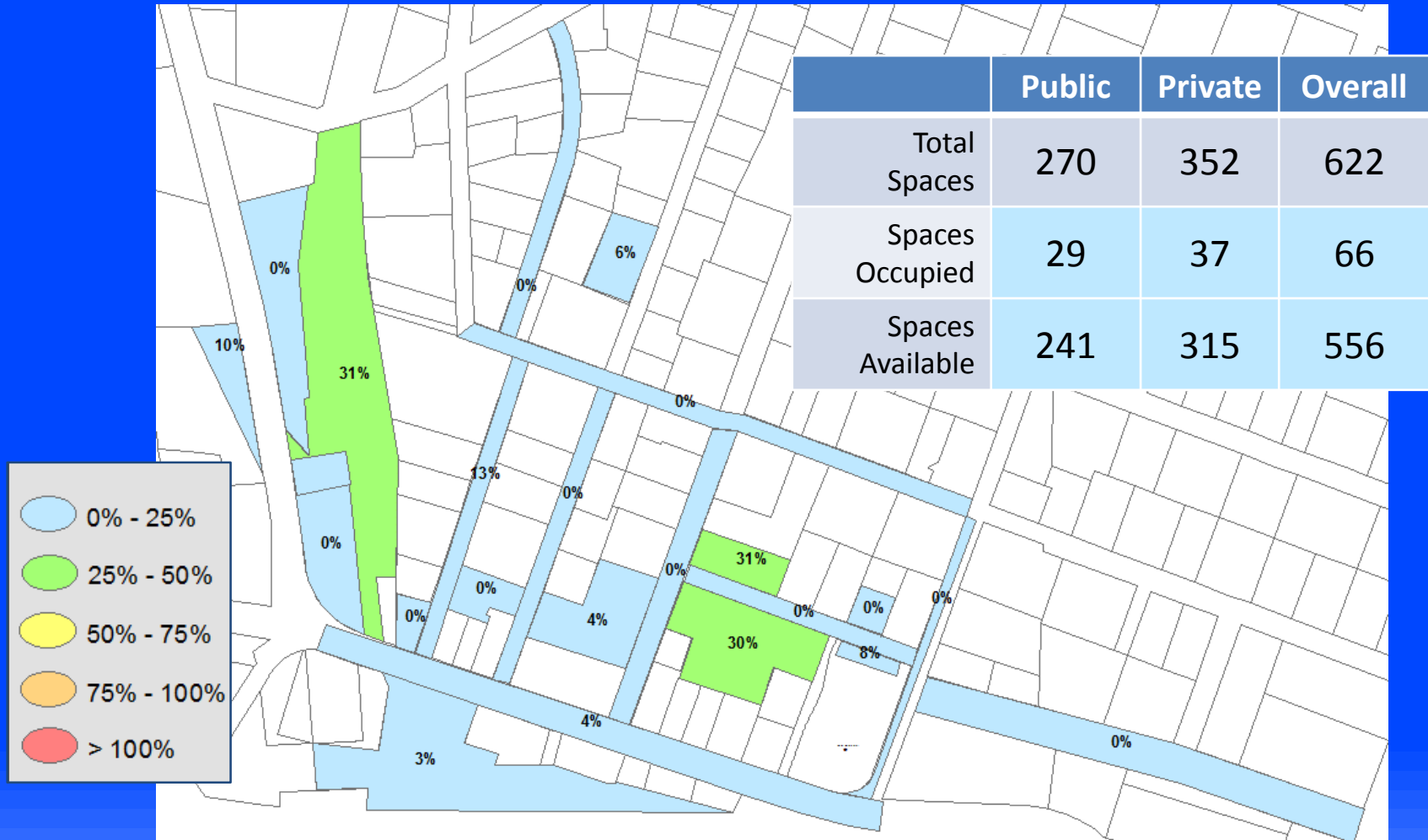
# PARKING RESTRICTIONS



# PARKING SUPPLY

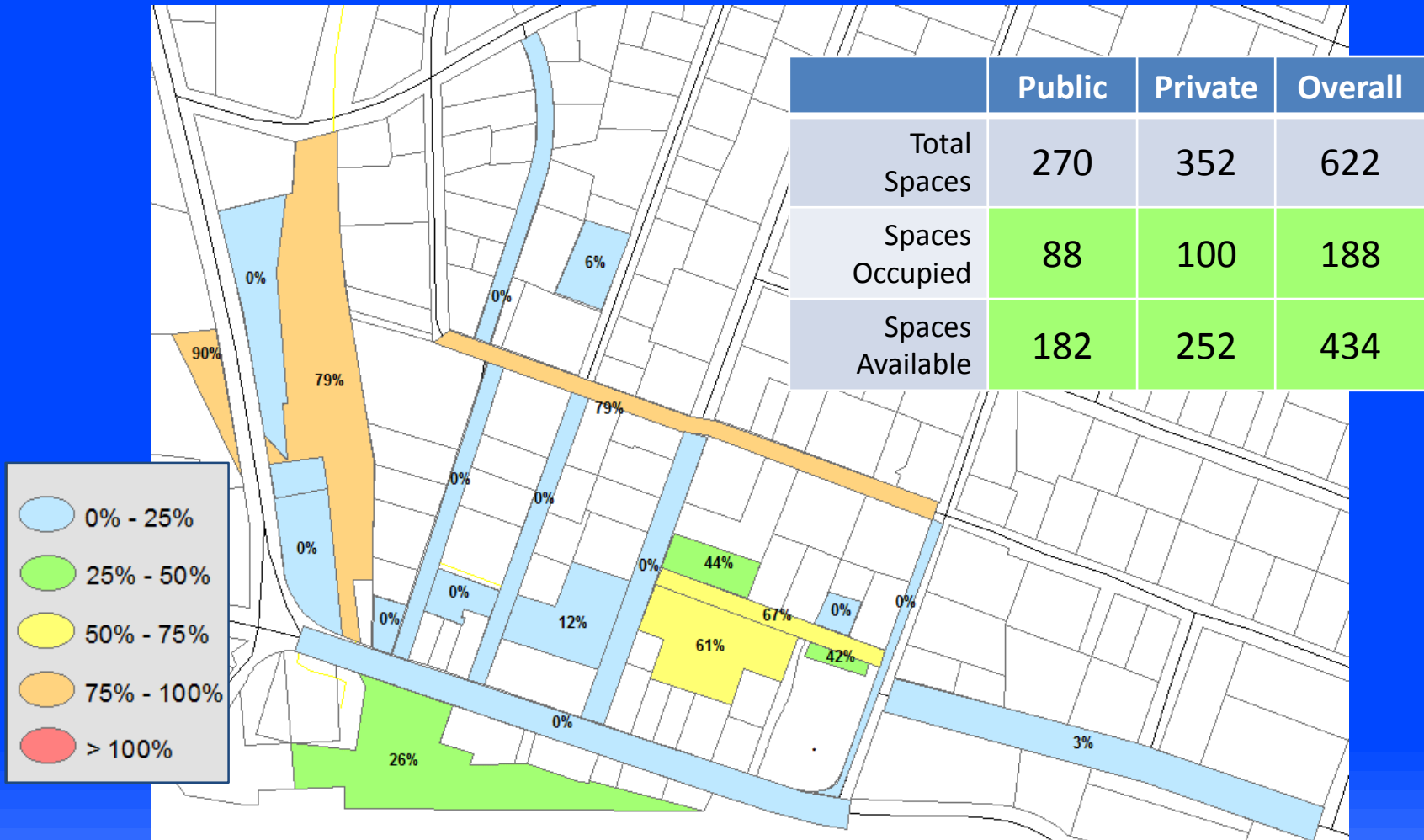


# OCCUPANCY – 6:00 a.m.



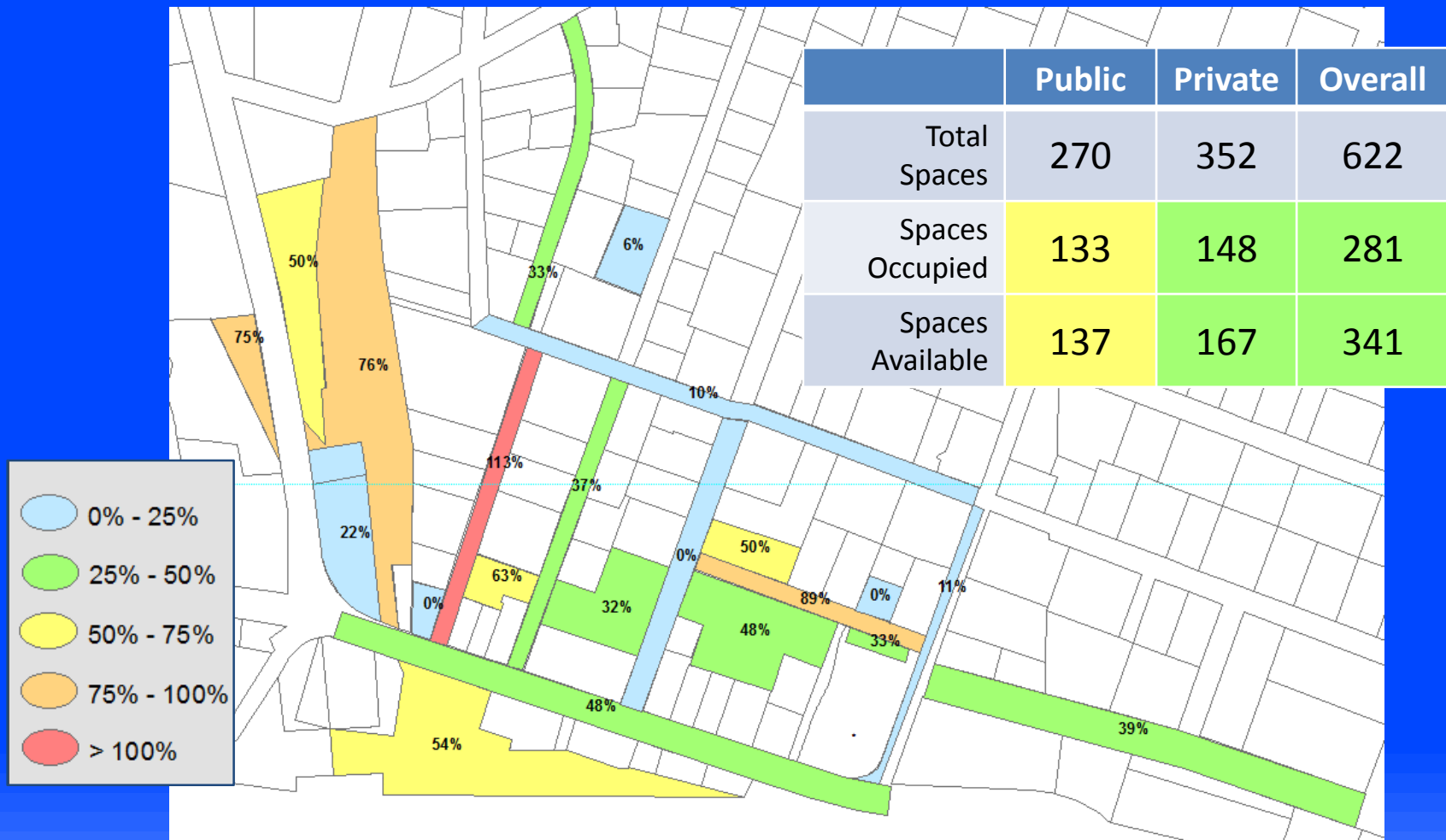


## OCCUPANCY – 8:00 a.m.

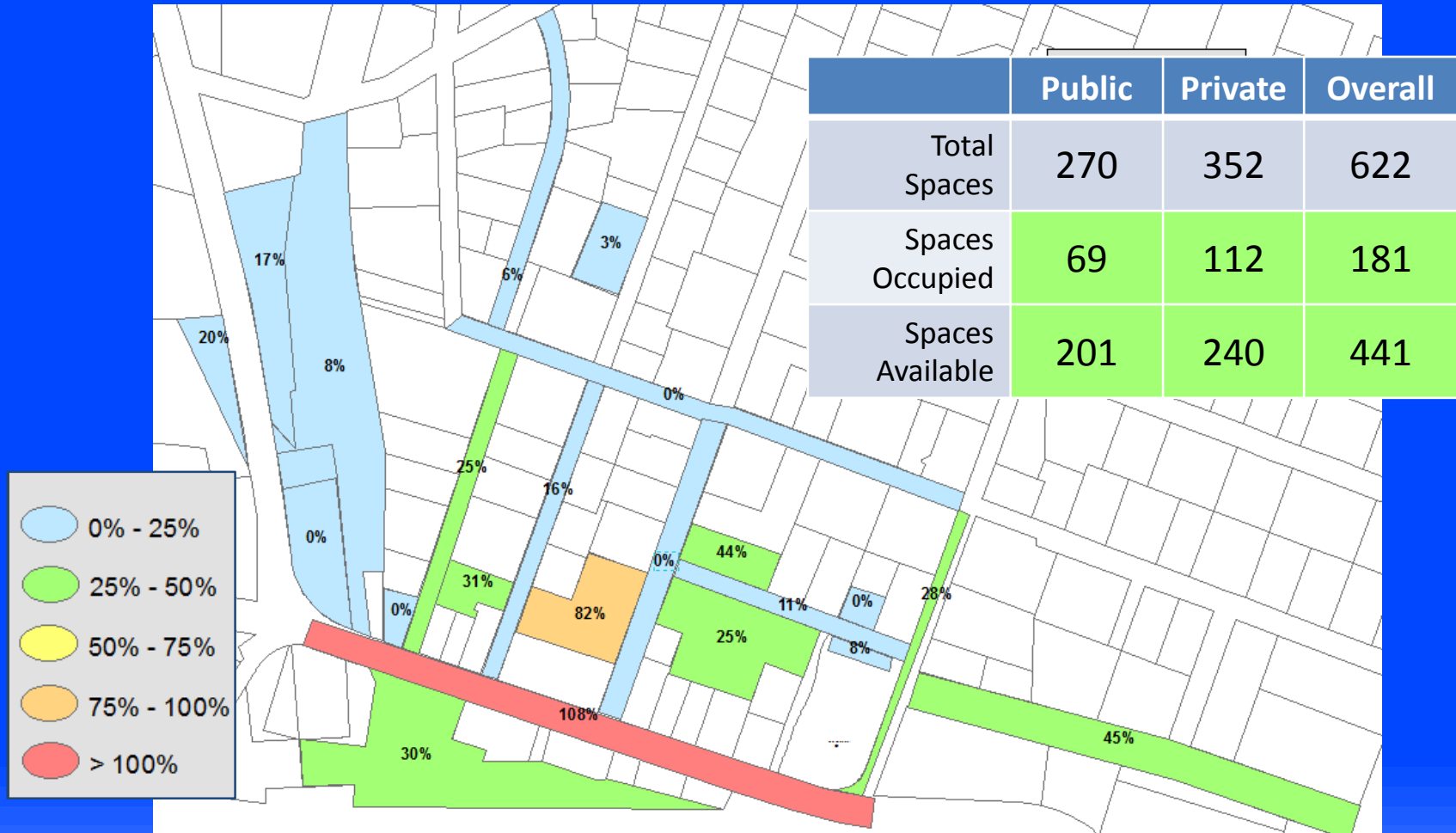




# OCCUPANCY – 5:00 p.m.

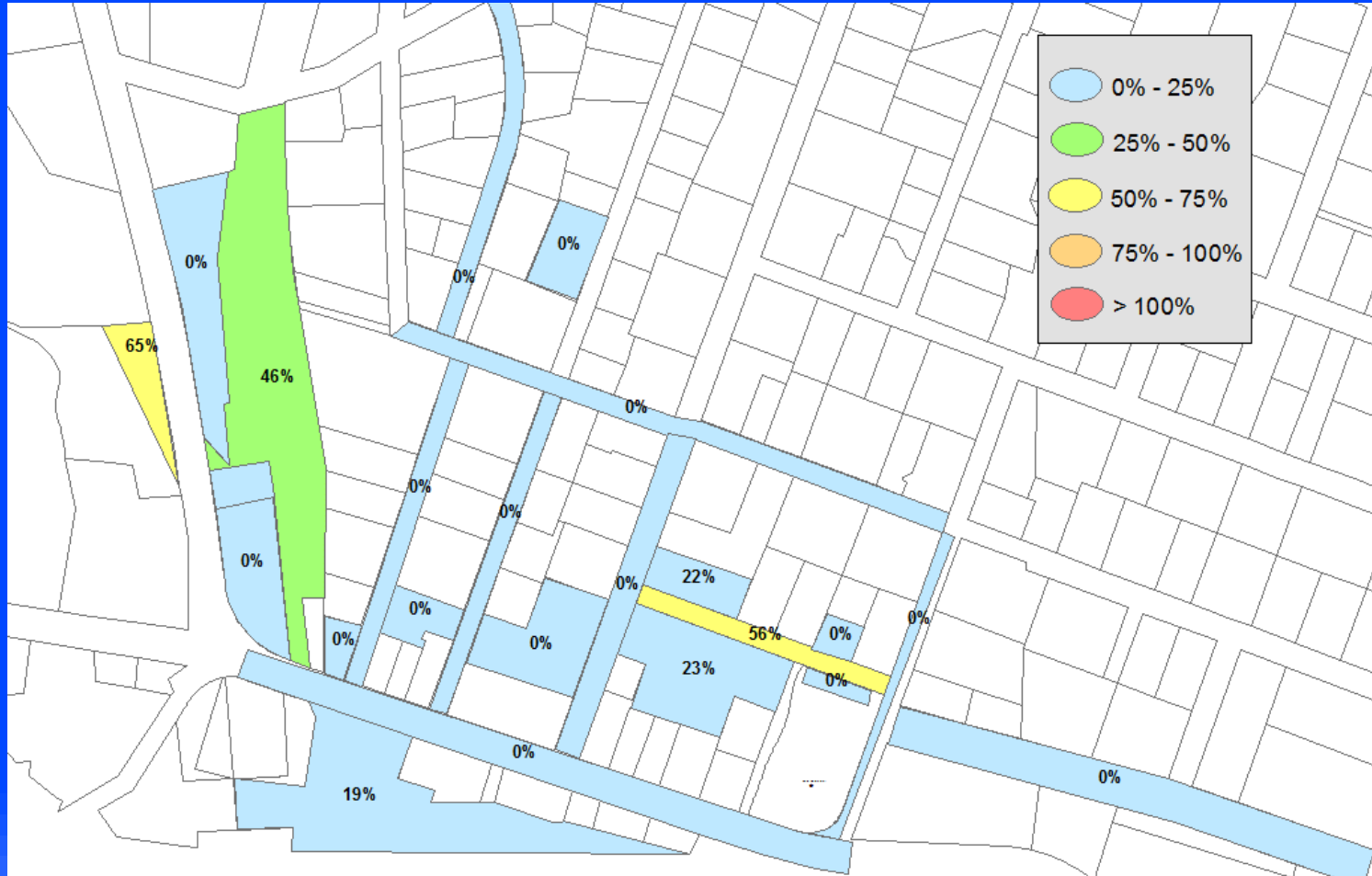


# OCCUPANCY – 7:45 p.m.



# OCCUPANCY – Commuter Parking

- Where are commuters parking?
- 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. – same vehicle parked in same space



# CONCLUSIONS

- Commuters take advantage of unrestricted parking
- Time limits are generally enforced/respected
- Main Street and West Street over parked in the evening
- Other available parking underutilized (on-street, Park Street lot, Rail Trail lot)

# ***BUSINESS FEEDBACK***

- “My customers get tickets”
- “Not enough parking for customers”
- “Need more parking for train riders”
- Commuters clog up parking on the streets



# ***PARKING STRATEGIES***

- **Unrestricted Parking**
- **Time Restrictions**
- **Metered Parking**
- **Shared Parking**
- **Residential Permits**
- **Wayfinding Signs**
- **Satellite Parking**





# ***PARKING STRATEGIES***

## ➤ **Unrestricted Parking**

### ✓ **Advantages:**

- ✓ Convenience
- ✓ No user cost
- ✓ No enforcement/  
maintenance costs



### ✗ **Challenges:**

- ✗ Lack of turnover
- ✗ No control over commuters
- ✗ Impacts on neighborhood residents

# PARKING STRATEGIES

## ➤ Time Restrictions

### ✓ Advantages:

- ✓ Turnover
- ✓ No cost
- ✓ Manage commuter parking

### ✗ Challenges:

- ✗ Inconvenience
- ✗ Enforcement
- ✗ Maintenance



# PARKING STRATEGIES

## ➤ Metered Parking

### ✓ Advantages:

- ✓ Turnover
- ✓ Revenue
- ✓ Manage commuter parking

### ✗ Challenges:

- ✗ Inconvenience
- ✗ Impact on Main St businesses
- ✗ User Cost
- ✗ Capital Cost
- ✗ Enforcement/Maintenance



# PARKING STRATEGIES

## ➤ Shared Parking

### ✓ Advantages:

- ✓ Parking Supply
- ✓ Convenience
- ✓ Land use

### ✗ Challenges:

- ✗ Requires agreements with property owners
- ✗ Liability
- ✗ Responsibility of maintenance
- ✗ Design Standards
- ✗ Consistency



# ***PARKING STRATEGIES***

## ➤ **Residential Permit Parking**

### ✓ **Advantages:**

- ✓ Parking Supply for Residents
- ✓ Less “out of town” impact on local streets
- ✓ Manage commuter parking

### ✗ **Challenges:**

- ✗ Cost to Town and/or residents
- ✗ Enforcement
- ✗ Inconvenience for visitors, new tenants



# PARKING STRATEGIES

## ➤ Wayfinding Signs

### ✓ Advantages:

- ✓ More efficient use of parking supply



### ✗ Challenges:

- ✗ Capital cost
- ✗ Potential ADA issues on sidewalks
- ✗ Maintenance





# PARKING STRATEGIES

## ➤ Satellite Parking

### ✓ Advantages:

- ✓ Additional Supply
- ✓ Land use
- ✓ Economic activity

### ✗ Challenges:

- ✗ Inconvenience
- ✗ Capital/Operational cost
- ✗ User cost
- ✗ Maintenance





## ***DISCUSSION STRATEGIES FOR AYER***

- Marked spaces on Main Street
- Shared parking at private lots for customers and employees
- On-Street parking permits for neighborhood residents and businesses
- Permit parking only on specific streets
- Pay kiosks for Main Street with some free minutes
- Pay kiosk for 0 Park Street lot
- Improved signs – Time restrictions, wayfinding



## ***NEXT STEPS***

- Additional Survey Responses
- Feedback from Selectmen/Police/Community
- Meet with Property Owners
- Additional Data Analysis
- Refine Recommendations



#### **4.3 Sample Shared Parking Agreement**

**Appendix B: Model - Shared Use Agreement for Parking Facilities**  
**Effective: \_\_\_\_\_**

This Shared Use Agreement for Parking Facilities, entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, between \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called lessor and \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called lessee.

In consideration of the covenants herein, lessor agrees to share with lessee certain parking facilities, as is situated in the City of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called the facilities, described as:

[Include legal description of location and spaces to be shared here, and as shown on attachment 1.]

The facilities shall be shared commencing with the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and ending at 11:59 PM on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, for [insert negotiated compensation figures, as appropriate]. [The lessee agrees to pay at [insert payment address] to lessor by the \_\_\_\_ day of each month [or other payment arrangements].]

Lessor hereby represents that it holds legal title to the facilities

**The parties agree:**

1. USE OF FACILITIES

This section should describe the nature of the shared use (exclusive, joint sections, time(s) and day(s) of week of usage.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessee shall have exclusive use of the facilities. The use shall only be between the hours of 5:30 PM Friday through 5:30 AM Monday and between the hours of 5:30 PM and 5:30 AM Monday through Thursday.]*

2. MAINTENANCE

This section should describe responsibility for aspects of maintenance of the facilities. This could include cleaning, striping, seal coating, asphalt repair and more.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessor shall provide, as reasonably necessary asphalt repair work. Lessee and Lessor agree to share striping, seal coating and lot sweeping at a 50%/50% split based upon mutually accepted maintenance contracts with outside vendors. Lessor shall maintain lot and landscaping at or above the current condition, at no additional cost to the lessee.]*

### 3. UTILITIES and TAXES

This section should describe responsibility for utilities and taxes. This could include electrical, water, sewage, and more.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessor shall pay all taxes and utilities associated with the facilities, including maintenance of existing facility lighting as directed by standard safety practices.]*

### 4. SIGNAGE

This section should describe signage allowances and restrictions.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessee may provide signage, meeting with the written approval of lessor, designating usage allowances.]*

### 5. ENFORCEMENT

This section should describe any facility usage enforcement methods.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessee may provide a surveillance officer(s) for parking safety and usage only for the period of its exclusive use. Lessee and lessor reserve the right to tow, at owners expense, vehicles improperly parked or abandoned. All towing shall be with the approval of the lessor.]*

### 6. COOPERATION

This section should describe communication relationship.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[Lessor and lessee agree to cooperate to the best of their abilities to mutually use the facilities without disrupting the other party. The parties agree to meet on occasion to work out any problems that may arise to the shared use.]*

### 7. INSURANCE

This section should describe insurance requirements for the facilities.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**

*[At their own expense, lessor and lessee agree to maintain liability insurance for the facilities as is standard for their own business usage.]*

### 8. INDEMNIFICATION

This section should describe indemnification as applicable and negotiated. This is a very technical section and legal counsel should be consulted for appropriate language to each and every agreement.

**~~-NO SAMPLE CLAUSE PROVIDED-~~**

9. TERMINATION

This section should describe how to or if this agreement can be terminated and post termination responsibilities.

**~~-SAMPLE CLAUSE-~~**

*[If lessor transfers ownership, or if part of all of the facilities are condemned, or access to the facilities is changed or limited, lessee may, in its sole discretion terminate this agreement without further liability by giving Lessor not less than 60 days prior written notice.*

*Upon termination of this agreement, Lessee agrees to remove all signage and repair damage due to excessive use or abuse. Lessor agrees to give lessee the right of first refusal on subsequent renewal of this agreement.]*

10. SUPPLEMENTAL COVENANTS

This section should contain any additional covenants, rights, responsibilities and/or agreements.

**~~-NO SAMPLE CLAUSE PROVIDED-~~**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the Effective Date Set forth at the outset hereof.

[Signature and notarization as appropriate to a legal document and as appropriate to recording process negotiated between parties.]





#### **4.4 Department of Public Works Memorandum, June 28, 2017**

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

---

Mark L. Wetzel, P.E., Superintendent  
Dan Van Schalkwyk, P.E. Town Engineer  
Pamela J. Martin, Business Manager

25 BROOK STREET  
AYER, MASSACHUSETTS 01432  
T: (978) 772-8240  
F: (978) 772-8244

## Memorandum

Date: June 28, 2017

To: Bill Mertz, WorldTech Engineering

From: Mark Wetzel P.E., Public Works Superintendent

Re: Parking Management Study

I think we've got as much info as we are going to get from the businesses for the parking management study. I've prepared an outline of the parking management strategies that I see as the best for Ayer. Please use this info to proceed with the report.

### **Ayer Parking Management Strategies**

The development of a parking management plan includes:

- Continuing / modifying existing practices
- Developing short term strategies
- Develop long term strategies

One of the key issues related to implementation of the parking management strategies is the status of the proposed MART parking facility. The proposed facility will have a daily charge for parking. Until this occurs, it is difficult for the Town to manage where the commuters park and to charge for parking at other Town locations. In addition, without the new parking facility, commuters will continue to utilize parking for Main Street customers.

In general, I recommend the following strategies for Ayer.

- Review parking signage and zones to define 2-hour parking, commuter parking and resident parking areas. Install new signage as required
- Establish "Resident Parking Only" zones and provide parking stickers to residents.
- Establish shared parking agreements for Page Moore Building, Federated Church and Depot Square parking lots and add signage and line painting in accordance with agreement
- Mark out parking spaces or no parking spaces on Main Street to keep cars from parking on / close to crosswalks
- Install a parking payment kiosk at 0 Park St lot -\$4.00 per day
- Evaluate / Implement angel parking on Central Ave from Columbia St to Post Office entrance

- Enforce parking violations

## EXAMPLES

### Short Term Strategies

<u>Strategy</u>	Define / establish parking zones
<u>Description</u>	Review parking signage and zones to define 2-hour parking, commuter parking and resident parking areas. Install new signage as required
<u>Pros</u>	Relatively easy and inexpensive to implement
<u>Cons</u>	Additional costs will be incurred to replace signs if redevelopment and increased demand necessitate area-specific time limits
<u>Action</u>	
<u>Implementation</u>	Meet with Police Chief and Town Administrator and better define specific zones, publish on social media and place new signs

<u>Strategy</u>	Establish “Resident Parking Only” zones and provide parking stickers to residents
<u>Description</u>	Establish resident parking zones; begin by providing 2 free parking permits per single-family residence, duplex unit, or townhouse unit with less than 2 off-street parking spaces (garage or paved), 1 free parking permit per single-family residence, duplex, unit, or townhouse unit with 2 or more off-street parking spaces (garage or paved), and 1 free parking permit per multifamily unit with less than 1 off-street parking space (garage or paved) per unit; charge nominal fee for additional permit and raise fees as demand necessitates; tailor to each residential parking zone by <u>inventory of on-street parking supply</u>
<u>Pros</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides long-term parking for residents and prevents other cars from parking all day in spaces convenient and valuable to residents, thereby encouraging downtown employees and commuters to obtain off-street parking permits</li> <li>• Free permits to a certain extent is more or less in line with the overwhelming Downtown Parking Survey response of not having to pay for parking</li> <li>• Reinforces a “customer-first” ethic amongst downtown employees who choose to park on- street all day by providing impetus to purchase an off-street parking permit</li> </ul>
<u>Cons</u>	Additional costs will be incurred to replace signs if redevelopment and increased demand necessitate area-specific time limits
<u>Action</u>	

<u>Implementation</u>	Meet with Police Chief and Town Administrator and define residents only area and permitting process.
-----------------------	--

<u>Strategy</u>	Wayfinding signage
<u>Description</u>	Direct drivers to available off-street parking
<u>Pros</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Allows business customers to locate parking areas</li> <li>•Relatively easy and inexpensive to implement</li> </ul>
<u>Cons</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May work too well, shifting parking supply problems exclusively to off-street parking lots</li> <li>•Additional costs will be incurred to replace signs if comprehensive downtown signage program is implemented in the future</li> </ul>
<u>Action</u>	

<u>Strategy</u>	On-street permit parking
<u>Description</u>	Establish resident parking zones; begin by providing 2 free parking permits per single-family residence, duplex unit, or townhouse unit with less than 2 off-street parking spaces (garage or paved), 1 free parking permit per single-family residence, duplex, unit, or townhouse unit with 2 or more off-street parking spaces (garage or paved), and 1 free parking permit per multifamily unit with less than 1 off-street parking space (garage or paved) per unit; charge nominal fee for additional permit and raise fees as demand necessitates; tailor to each residential parking zone by inventory of on-street parking supply
<u>Pros</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides long-term parking for residents and prevents other cars from parking all day in spaces convenient and valuable to residents, thereby encouraging downtown employees and commuters to obtain off-street parking permits</li> <li>• Free permits to a certain extent is more or less in line with the overwhelming Downtown Parking Survey response of not having to pay for parking</li> <li>• Reinforces a “customer-first” ethic amongst downtown employees who choose to park on- street all day by providing impetus to purchase an off-street parking permit</li> </ul>
<u>Cons</u>	Past opposition has stalled implementation of residential parking zones

	Requires significant enforcement
<u>Action</u>	