



WATERTOWN

Parking Management Plan

July 2019





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	3
Study Findings	4
Final Recommendations	6
Recommendations	9
Introduction & Recommendation	9
1. Upgrade Parking Payment Technology	10
2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability	12
3. Consider Re-introducing Parking in Key Areas (Off-peak)	16
4. Strongly Identify Municipal Parking Lots by Branding and Wayfinding	18
5. Invest in Infrastructure Upgrades to Municipal Parking Lots	20
6. Improve Wayfinding and Signage	22
7. Work with Owners of Privately Owned Off-Street Lots for Potential Shared Parking Opportunities	24
8. Re-Direct Employee Parking Demand	26
9. Reduce Parking Demand by Enhancing Access for Non-Vehicle Modes	28
10. Adjust Parking & Zoning Standards to Encourage Investment	30

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Parking is a critical element of a commercial center's health and growth. The expectation that parking is available and accessible is important for all users, as they shop, dine, work, visit, or conduct their daily business. All customers should be able to easily comprehend their parking and transportation options and the costs and rules associated with them.

The common perception in Watertown is that a parking shortage exists in Watertown Square and Coolidge Square. To address this, the Town developed the Parking Management Plan to consider parking supply, demand, location, pricing, and management in Watertown Square and Coolidge Square.

The Plan includes an **extensive data collection** effort and a **robust public engagement strategy**. To understand both the parking use on the ground and the lived experience and perception of the parking system, through the input of Watertown residents, shoppers, employees and visitors.

The Town identified several key goals for the plan with input from the public. These goals are critical in guiding the plan process and development of strategies.

STUDY GOALS

- **Create a baseline understanding of parking demand and its role in Watertown Square and Coolidge Square**
- **Manage existing parking better for various users, including customers, employees, and Square visitors**
- **Support businesses and institutions**
- **Reduce parking demand where possible**
- **Encourage facilities that support all transportation modes**
- **Creatively develop solutions that can be implemented and managed cost effectively**

STUDY PROCESS



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Executive Summary of the Parking Management Plan contains findings and recommendations from the Parking Management Plan. More detailed information on the analyses can be found in the technical appendices:

EXISTING CONDITIONS FINDINGS:

Watertown & Coolidge Square parking inventory, utilization, and multimodal conditions

PARKING MANAGEMENT & ZONING

ASSESSMENT: Review of parking permit system, payment technology, administration and enforcement, and the impacts of zoning regulations

PUBLIC PROCESS FEEDBACK:

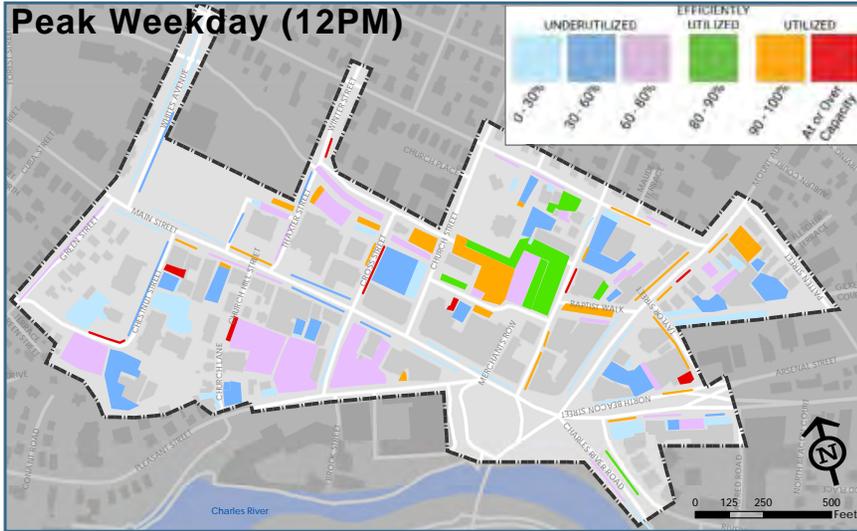
Observations and findings from open houses and an online public outreach survey

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Study Findings

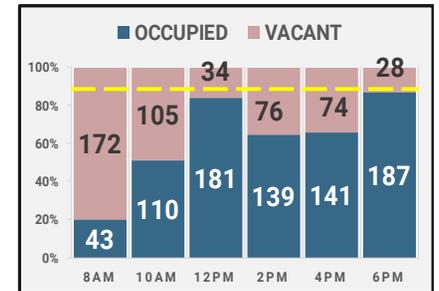
WATERTOWN SQUARE KEY FINDINGS

Peak Weekday (12PM)



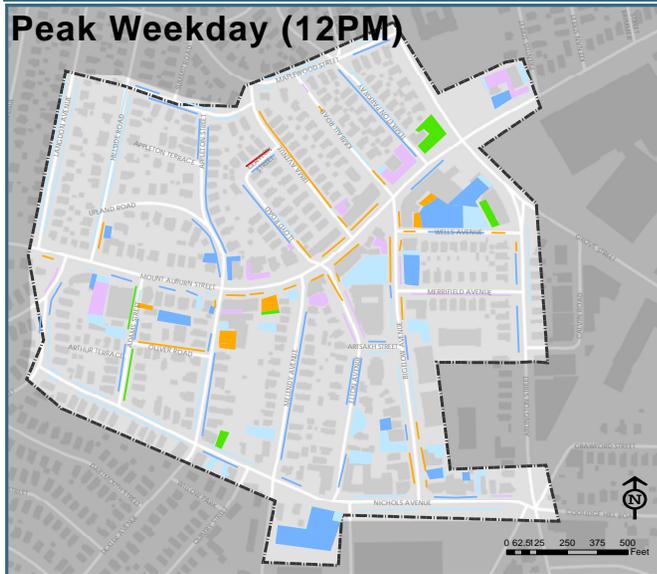
- Public parking spaces are busy all week (On-street spaces utilized at 60% occupancy, Off-street spaces utilized at < 50% occupancy)
- Private, off-street parking is underutilized all week at around 40%
- Public off-street parking is 90% full midday on the weekends while private lots are only 30% full
- Mt Auburn Street on-street spaces are popular at over 80% full during the week

Public off-street parking: Watertown Square Municipal Lot (Weekday)



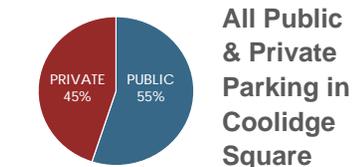
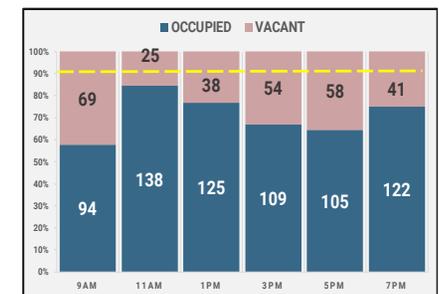
COOLIDGE SQUARE KEY FINDINGS

Peak Weekday (12PM)



- Mt Auburn public on-street parking spaces are always busy at 60-80% full
- Private, off-street parking has availability all week and never exceeds 40% full
- Residential on-street parking close to Coolidge Square is underutilized
- The Nichols Avenue Municipal parking is underutilized during the week (10-50% full from 8am-4pm)
- The Wells Avenue Municipal Lot is well utilized on the weekends at over 60%,
- The Wells Avenue Municipal Lot never exceeds 30% full on weekdays

On-street priced parking zone (Weekend)



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Study Findings

Public Engagement Process

Public Engagement Survey, November 6th, 2018

- Give feedback on existing parking conditions

Public Outreach Meetings, January 23rd & 24th, 2019

- Map comments on parking issues and opportunities
- Review parking inventory and utilization data
- Give feedback on parking technology options

Draft Strategies Presentation, May 7th, 2019

- Present draft parking management improvement strategies

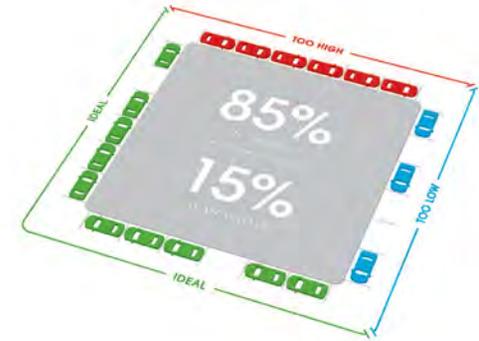
WHAT WE HEARD

- Public Outreach Survey solicited **~1,000 responses**
- Most people **drive alone**
- Watertown Square respondents **prefer to park in off-street spaces**
- People want to improve the **parking payment technology**
- Participants want to improve the **walking and biking environment**
- Employees want **designated parking**
- Respondents expressed that they observe parking crunches in each Square, making it difficult to find parking
- Respondents are willing to **park once** and walk between destinations

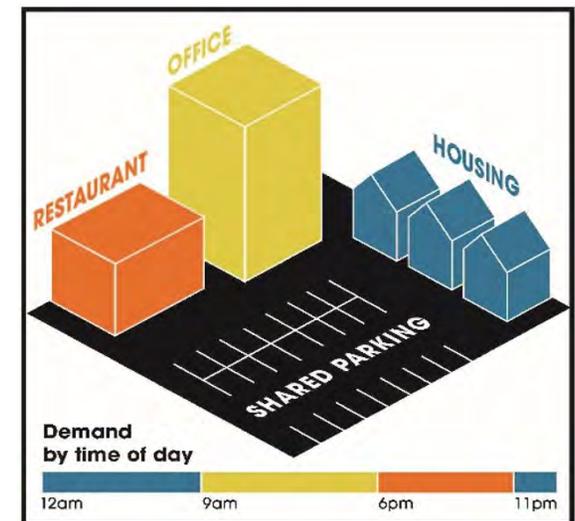


WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Everyone wants to **park in the same parking areas closest to stores**
- **Too many different/confusing regulations**
- **Parking technology is outdated**, creating frustration for users
- Parking is **underutilized during peak times** (Overall parking system is only 50% full)
- Current **pricing concentrates demand** in key locations
- More than **half of parking spaces are privately owned** and unavailable to the public, despite vacancy at peak times
- **Municipal lots are not well connected** to storefronts
- **Watertown Square local business permit program provides cheap access to prime parking** and sells out every quarter
- **Coolidge Square local business permit program is not well utilized**



The ideal target for parking vacancy is 15% per block and 10% in off-street lots. Facilities with lower vacancy are effectively at capacity, causing drivers to circle the block looking for parking and increasing congestion.



Shared parking allows privately owned parking spaces to serve different uses as demand peaks throughout the day.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Final Recommendations

1. Upgrade Parking Payment Technology
2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability
3. Consider Re-introducing Parking in Key Areas (Off-peak)
4. Strongly Identify Municipal Parking Lots by Branding and Wayfinding
5. Invest in Infrastructure Upgrades to Municipal Parking Lots
6. Improve Wayfinding and Signage
7. Work with Owners of Privately Owned Off-street Lots for Potential Shared Parking Opportunities
8. Re-Direct Employee Parking Demand
9. Reduce Overall Parking Demand by Enhancing Access for Non-Vehicle Modes
10. Adjust Parking & Zoning Standards to Encourage Investment in the Squares



▲ New parking technology allows for more payment flexibility and is user-friendly



◀ Regulating and adjusting parking will help reduce parking pressure in popular parking spaces



◀ Wayfinding signage helps intercept drivers and direct visitors to parking and businesses



◀ Prioritizing multimodal improvements in both Squares can encourage the use of bicycles, transit, rideshare, and walking



HOURS OF OPERATION
7 AM - 6 PM
EXCLUDING SUNDAYS
& HOLIDAYS

HOURS OF OPERATION
7 AM - 6 PM
EXCLUDING SUNDAYS
& HOLIDAYS

1:02

PARKING POLICY + MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction & Recommendation



Watertown Square and Coolidge Square are the two main commercial centers in the Town of Watertown, located about 1.5 miles apart. Each Square has numerous commercial, civic and transportation uses with competing and overlapping parking demands. While recommendations are specific to each locale, they also inform a larger Town-wide approach to parking management.

The Plan helps support Watertown's commercial centers to make them more user friendly and welcoming. It describes current parking needs, supply, and use. Recommendations are focused on supporting new and existing businesses and customers, while using existing parking resources more efficiently. The Plan includes strategies to alleviate real and perceived parking problems in the Watertown Square and Coolidge Square commercial districts.

ABOUT THIS SECTION

Each recommendation is described using the outline below, and contains various supporting graphics throughout the document:

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW: How each recommendation addresses the study goals

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES: Challenges and key findings from the existing conditions report and public feedback

ACTION ITEMS: Strategies to implement the recommendation

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS: Anticipated outcomes from the Action Items.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Upgrade Parking Payment Technology

OVERVIEW

Investing in more modern parking technology makes it easier for parkers to pay for their parking space. The current coin-only meters do not allow for payment flexibility, which potentially deters people from visiting Watertown and Coolidge Squares. A system with multiple options and clear instructions can improve the parking experience, as well as give the Town valuable information on how the parking system is functioning.

ACTION ITEMS

- Replace old meters and install new, smart meters
- Implement Pay-by-Phone technology
- Link with License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology for easier enforcement



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Existing technology is not user-friendly. 61% of Coolidge Square residents highly prefer to pay with individual meters that take credit cards and coins
- Current meters only take coins. Parkers without correct change are unable to pay to park through the current technology system
- Permit program is not linked with parking technology. The current system uses permit decals that are not connected to the existing system

Existing Meters



The public stated in the open house that this system is outdated

New Meters



Replacing the current meters with new, smart meters will allow for more payment flexibility and data collection, while maintaining the ability to pay with coins

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Upgrade Parking Payment Technology



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Increases payment options to make parking easier
- Potentially increases meter payment compliance, as 46% of all 2017 parking ticket violations were meter violations
- Integration of smart meters and pay-by-phone data has the ability to give the Town real-time and historical utilization information
- Using a Pay-by-Phone application will increase flexibility and efficiency
- License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology allows permit holders to use license plates instead of dashboard placards



Pay-by-Phone technology allows parkers to extend their parking time from remote locations



License Plate Recognition helps permit holders and makes enforcement easier

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability

OVERVIEW

Restructuring and simplifying current parking regulations to distribute demand will help relieve parking congestion in popular locations. By increasing pricing in areas of high demand and directing cars to lower-priced, underutilized spaces, parking will “open up”, giving short-term visitors more availability to park closer to their destination. The current system creates a perceived parking shortage, as most park in either core on-street spaces in Coolidge Square or the municipal lot in Watertown Square.

ACTION ITEMS

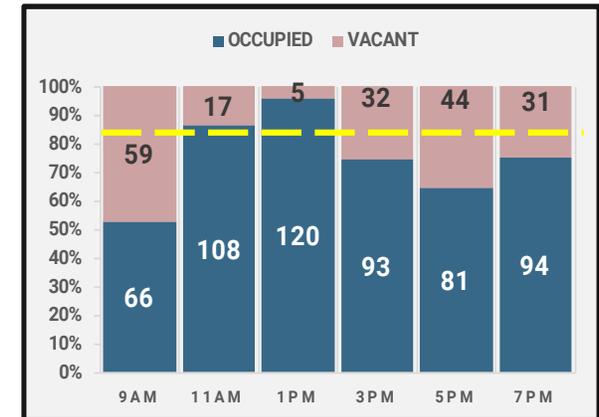
- Create tiered price parking zones
- Remove time limits from priced parking
- Re-categorize unregulated on-street parking as “4-hour” time limited parking
- Increase prices / begin pricing and enhance enforcement in “core” parking zones that are consistently fairly full.
- Reduce prices in paid areas where utilization is low
- Establish a baseline parking availability target for tiered parking zones through utilization and parking technology data
- Monitor parking demand over time and adjust prices accordingly



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

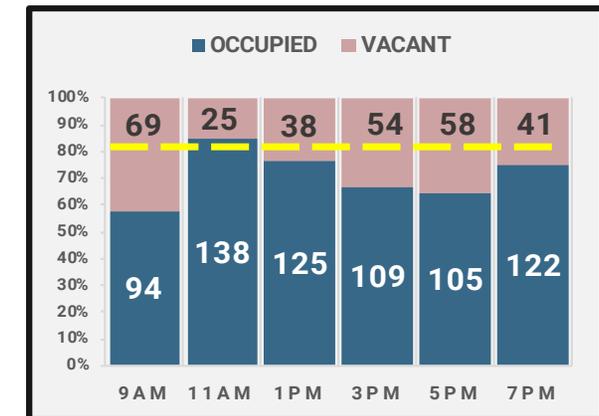
- Existing parking regulations are confusing
- Current pricing concentrates parking demand. Pricing does not distribute use. Municipal lots are priced the same as on-street facilities, but are less convenient, which concentrates parking demand in the most convenient locations. There is no incentive to park farther away.
- Time limits are not business or customer friendly
- 63% of Watertown Square survey respondents would prefer to park once and walk or bike between destinations
- There is a parking crunch in valuable convenient spaces

Watertown Square Municipal Lot 2-Hr Time Limit (Weekend)



The 2-hr time limit metered spaces in the Watertown Square Municipal Lot are the most popular parking spaces in the Square, reaching 60-80% occupancy

Coolidge Square On-Street Priced Parking (Weekend)



On-street, metered parking in Coolidge Square along Mt Auburn Street, Elton Avenue, Bigelow Avenue, Nichols Avenue (westbound parking along storefronts), and Wells Avenue is the most utilized

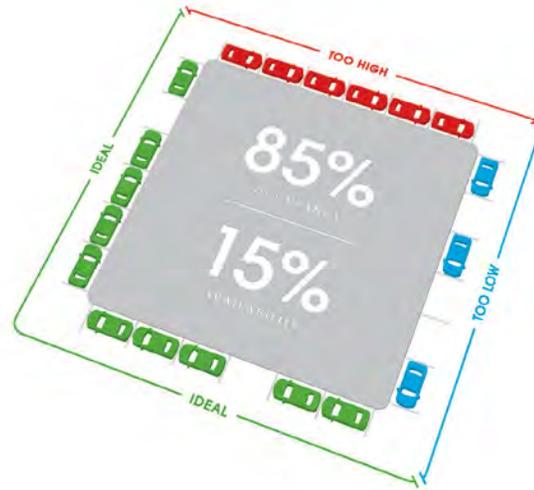
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Matching price to demand will create availability in key locations while incentivizing the use of underutilized, less convenient parking
- Using price, not time limits, allows visitors to the Squares to stay as long as they want and are willing to pay
- Increased meter revenue can be used for improvements such as new sidewalks and pedestrian lighting, ultimately making more remote parking feel closer
- Improves ADA accessibility by maintaining availability in key locations
- Setting a target and monitoring utilization allows the price to be adjusted as demand fluctuates with new development, travel patterns, pricing, etc.



Use utilization data and parking technology data to monitor baseline parking availability targets for the tiered parking zones

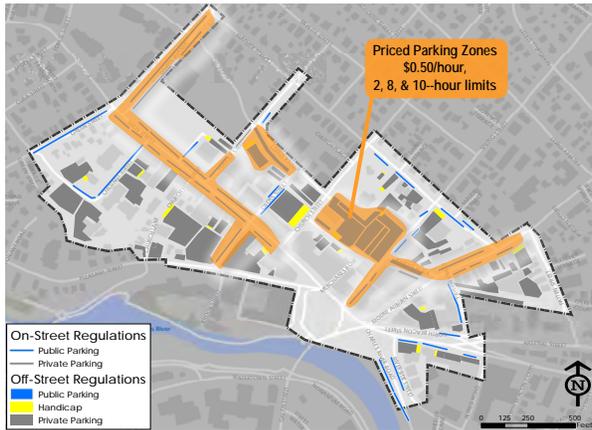


Use meter revenue from priced parking for street beautification and improvements to municipal lots, lighting and sidewalk infrastructure

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability

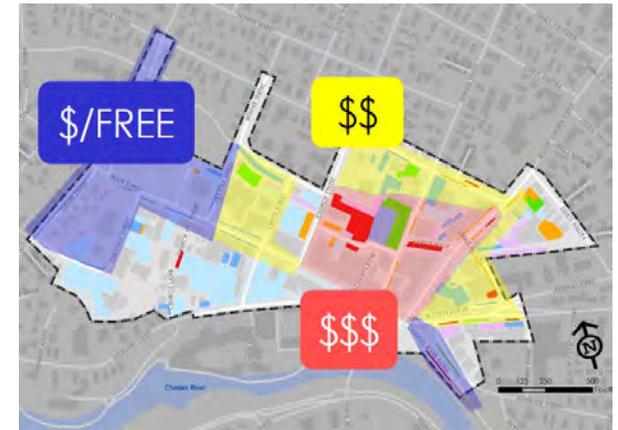
WATERTOWN SQUARE TIERED PARKING ZONES



Existing Priced Zones

To simplify parking regulations and remove the experience of a “parking crunch”, the Town can create tiered parking, giving Square visitors three zones to choose from. As seen in the map to the right, the most popular parking spaces would be priced the highest, followed by the cheaper “periphery” zone and the free, “outer” zone.

Zone	Price
All Metered Parking (Current Price)	\$0.50/hr
Zone 1 (Proposed Price)	\$1.00/hr
Zone 2 (Proposed Price)	\$0.50/hr
Zone 3 (Proposed Price)	Free



Proposed Priced Zones

COOLIDGE SQUARE TIERED PARKING ZONES



Existing Priced Zones

The +60% of survey respondents who are willing to park farther away for free parking in Watertown and Coolidge Squares will have the opportunity to park in Zones 2 and 3 for free or less expensive parking.

Zone	Price
All Metered Parking (Current Price)	\$0.50/hr
Zone 1 (Proposed Price)	\$1.00/hr
Zone 2 (Proposed Price)	\$0.50/hr
Zone 3 (Proposed Price)	Free

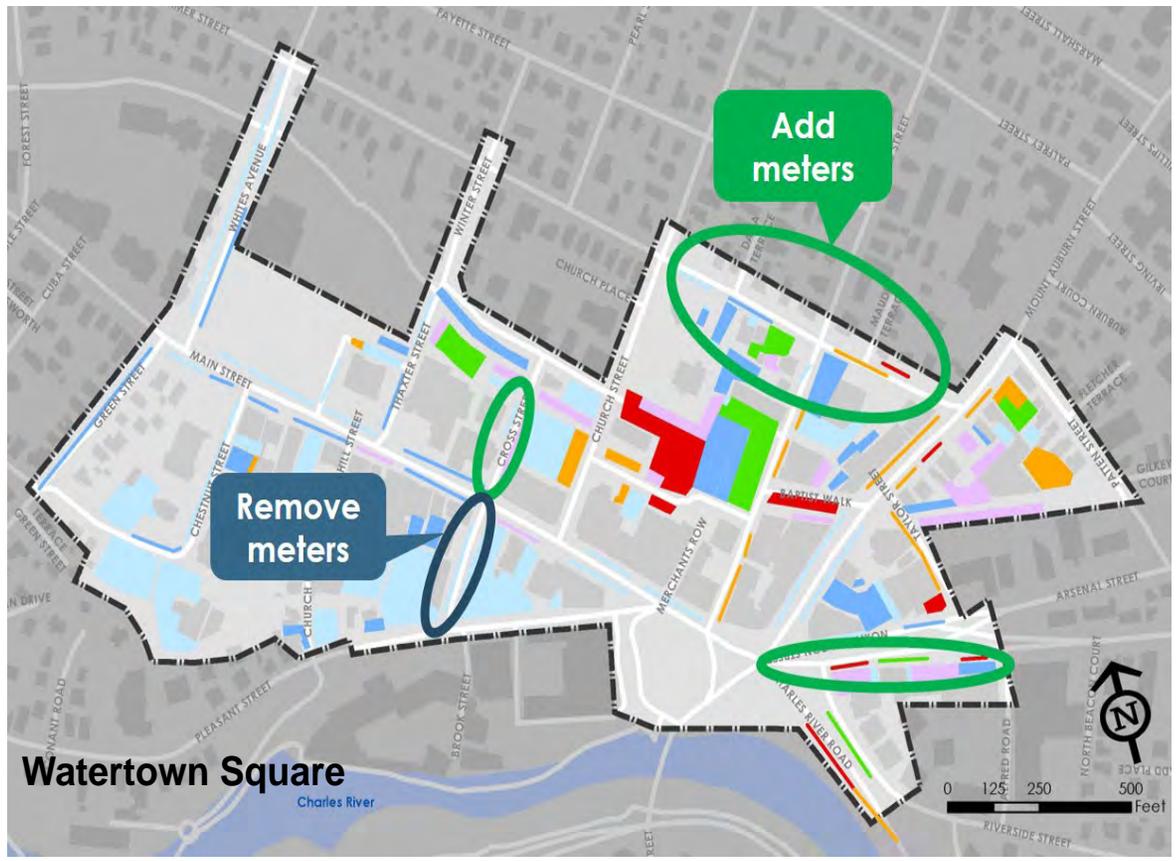


Proposed Priced Zones

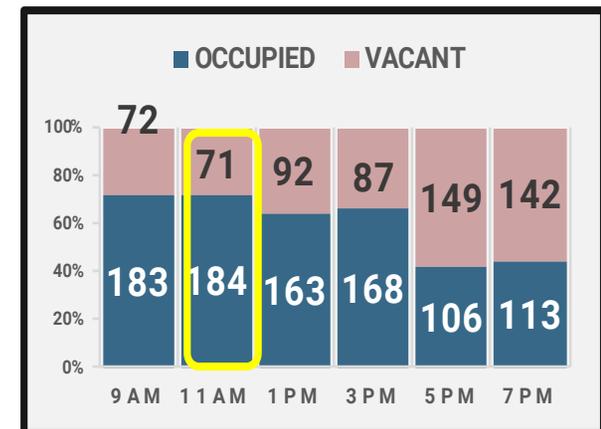
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Price & Regulate to Manage Parking Demand and Create Availability

PROPOSED CHANGES TO PRICED STREETS



Watertown Square Public On-Street Parking (Weekend)



Adding meters along streets such as Summer Street and removing them from Cross Street will diffuse the parking crunch that Watertown Square visitors experience in the most desirable locations.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Consider Re-introducing Parking in Key Areas (Off-peak)

OVERVIEW

Adding on-street parking during off-peak hours can reduce the demand for parking in prime locations. Currently, the parking demand in Watertown Square is concentrated in prime on-street spaces along Main Street and in the Watertown Square Municipal Lot. Adding parking along Main Street and Mt Auburn Street will reduce the “parking crunch” that exists today, by providing additional parking close to storefronts.

ACTION ITEMS

- Add up to 50 on-street spaces to Mt Auburn Street and Main Street
- Consider starting with an off-peak and weekend pilot project



Mt Auburn St businesses could benefit from more on-street parking



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Customers are highly influenced by proximity to destination
- Mt Auburn Street and Main Street lack on-street parking
- Current on-street parking is full in prime locations

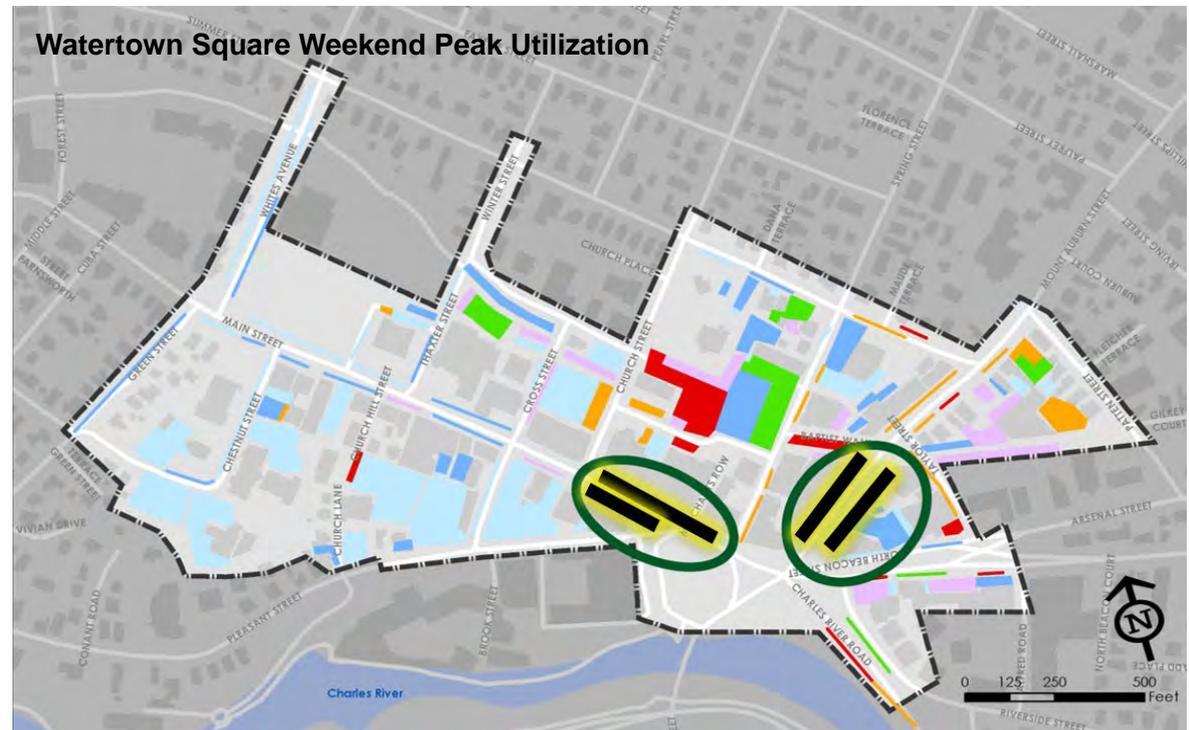
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Consider Re-introducing Parking in Key Areas (Off-peak)

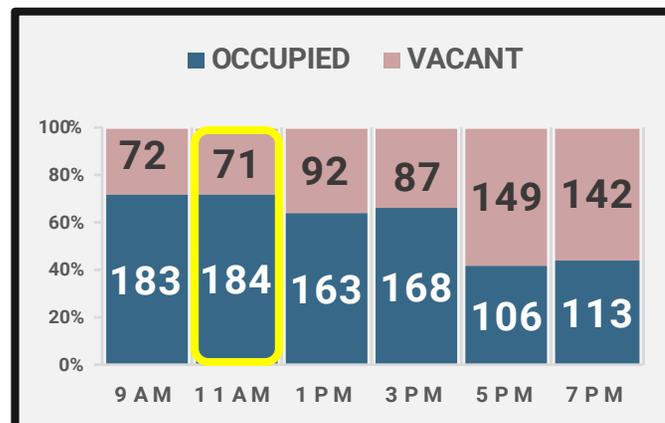


WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Increases convenient parking supply
- Reduces parking crunch in existing popular parking spaces
- Creates parking directly in front of existing stores
- Parking adds protection for pedestrians and adds to the retail character of these streets



Public On-Street Parking



Currently, on-street public parking is well utilized midday on the weekend. Providing off-peak parking on Main Street and Mt Auburn Street can offset the demand for parking in these spaces and put customers directly in front of stores

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Strongly Identify Municipal Parking Lots by Branding and Wayfinding

OVERVIEW

In Watertown and Coolidge Square, municipal parking lots do not have official, designated names and lack directional signage. The lack of official names can confuse Square visitors, as it can be difficult for those who drive to find public parking. Establishing formal names helps wayfinding, making it easier for drivers to find information on where to park.



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Municipal lots are not easily visible. Almost 30% of respondents are not aware that Coolidge Square has public park
- Directional signage is inconsistent
- There are no official, standardized signs or other identifiers for each public lot

ACTION ITEMS

- Establish official names for municipal parking lots
- Install standardized public parking signs that include parking lot names



In both Watertown and Coolidge Square, public lots do not have designated names. Instead, the public refers to lots such as the Watertown Square Municipal Lot as "the CVS lot".

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Strongly Identify Municipal Parking Lots by Branding and Wayfinding



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Establishing formal names acts as a wayfinding tool for parkers to find information on municipal parking
- Enhancing the visibility of these lots will encourage long-term parkers to use them, leaving on-street parking for short-term visitors such as customers
- Formal names allow for common identification and can be plugged into online wayfinding tools



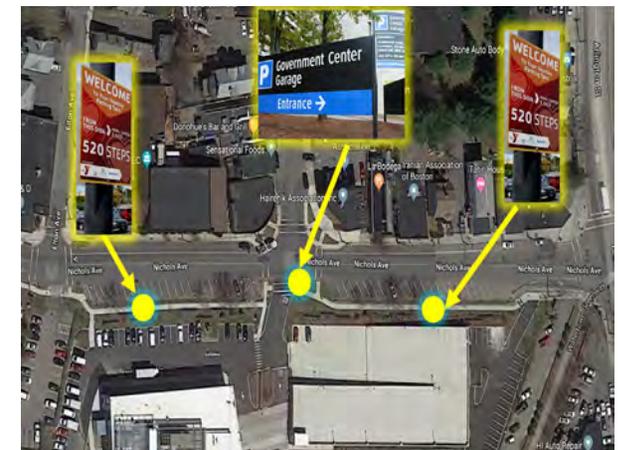
Parking lot entrance signs as seen in the image above direct people to public parking

WATERTOWN SQUARE



The Watertown Square Municipal Lot needs an entrance sign as well as directional wayfinding signage to show Square visitors where public parking is located and how far away they are from businesses

COOLIDGE SQUARE



The Wells Avenue Lot and public parking spaces along Nichols Avenue would benefit from wayfinding signage at key locations that give walking distances and times for popular Square attractions and storefronts

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Invest in Infrastructure Upgrades to Municipal Parking Lots

OVERVIEW

Encourage users to use municipal parking facilities by investing in improvements to municipal parking lots. Currently, municipal lots in Coolidge and Watertown Square lack proper walking facilities, bicycle accommodations, and lighting. These deficiencies are a disincentive for visitors to park in these locations. Simple infrastructure improvements to these lots can create a more pedestrian-friendly environment that safely connects customers to storefronts.

ACTION ITEMS

- Improve pedestrian paths, bicycle facilities, and lighting in Municipal Lots
- Connect the Wells Avenue Municipal Lot to Coolidge Square with sidewalks and signage
- Integrate the Community Path with the Watertown Square Municipal Lot upgrades
- Consider changing the directionality of Wells Avenue to allow for easier access to the municipal lot



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Municipal lots lack sidewalks and pedestrian paths
- Municipal lots do not have bicycle parking or accommodations
- Municipal lots are not well lit
- Pedestrian paths in Municipal Lots do not connect to commercial hubs
- Wells Avenue Lot is difficult to access due to one-way streets



Poor lighting conditions in parking lots create an unsafe environment for those who park in the early morning or evening

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

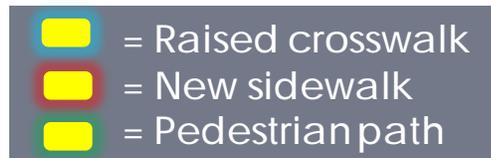
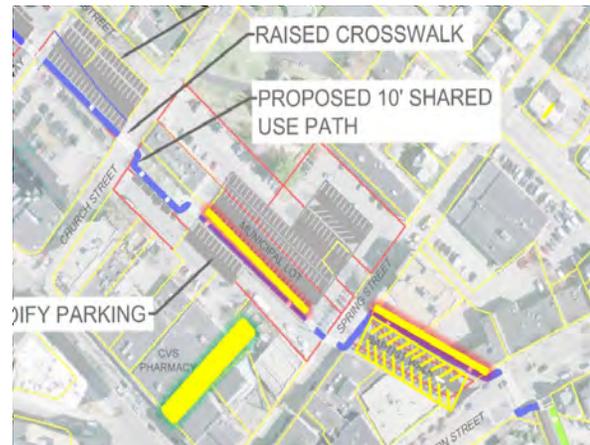
5. Invest in Infrastructure Upgrades to Municipal Parking Lots



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Infrastructure improvements in municipal parking will make it more comfortable and easy for people to park in these lots, opening up parking spaces in current prime locations such as Mt Auburn Street in Coolidge Square for customers
- Improving linkages for people walking to municipal lots helps walking distances feel shorter
- Providing bicycle parking, particularly secure, long-term parking, helps to encourage people to ride their bikes to the squares instead of drive, thus freeing up parking
- Two-way streets reduce circuitous driving and “circling,” making it easier to reach a destination such as the Wells Avenue lot
- Adding clear, distinct pedestrian paths/sidewalks in municipal lots improves safety, reduces conflicts, and directs pedestrians to the business district

WATERTOWN SQUARE



The Watertown Square Municipal Lot needs an entrance sign as well as directional wayfinding signage to show Square visitors the pedestrian paths to Watertown Square destinations

COOLIDGE SQUARE



The Wells Avenue Lot and public parking spaces along Nichols Avenue could benefit from improved pedestrian connections to make walking safer and more attractive

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Improve Wayfinding and Signage

OVERVIEW

Create a visitor friendly environment with wayfinding signage to help visitors access parking. Wayfinding signage should highlight on and off-street parking options. The signage should clearly indicate where the public is allowed to park and where businesses and local attractions are located. Wayfinding signage should:

- Define clear parking rules
- Identify public parking, including free and long-term parking (both on-and off-street), and bicycle parking. 30% of survey respondents are unaware that public parking exists in Coolidge Square
- Identify major points of interest, such as the Cultural Centers, popular restaurants, the Public Library, and Armenian museum
- Guide people walking to destinations

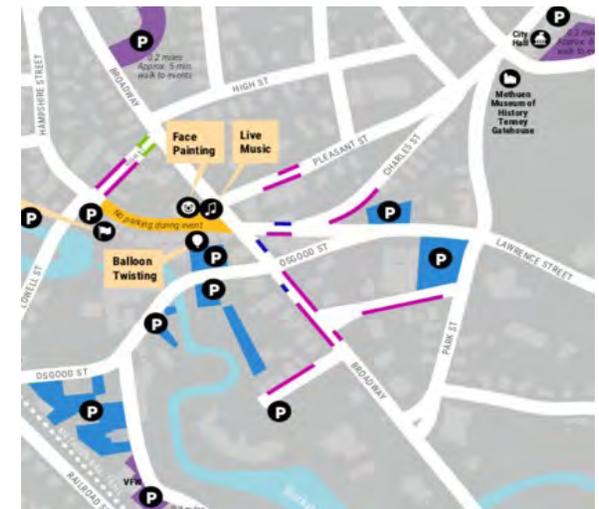
ACTION ITEMS

- Install standardized public parking signs that are directional and provide estimated walking distances and times
- Publish a user-friendly parking map on the Town website
- Add signs to direct drivers to underutilized lots and on-street spaces
- Work with private landowners to create standardized signage



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Drivers are unaware of less-used parking locations
- There is no easy way to walk between lots and destinations
- Prime parking areas are overwhelming for drivers. 55% of Coolidge Square drivers say they have left because they were unable to find parking
- Wells Avenue Municipal Lot is difficult to access from Mt. Auburn Street



The parking maps above clearly delineate parking locations and regulations in a public-friendly format

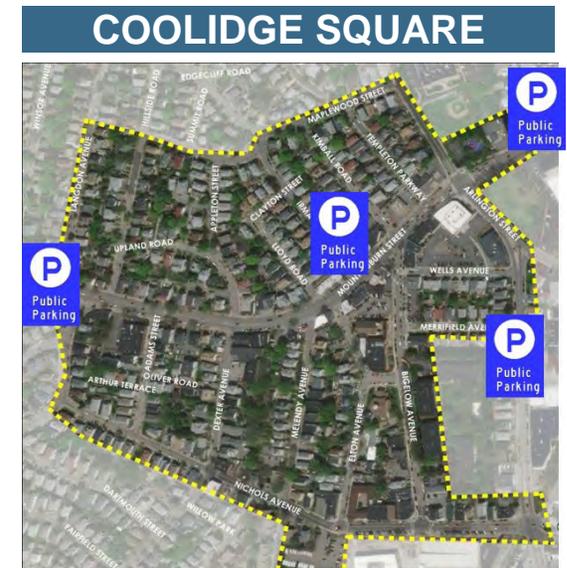
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Improve Wayfinding and Signage



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Wayfinding signage encourages people to use parking that meets their needs, such as helping long-term parkers find remote lots. This will free up “core” parking for customers / visitors
- Helps Square visitors return to their vehicles
- A parking map describes available parking resources and helps visitors easily find the right parking. Informative labeling on meters/parking technology also provides guidance to those visiting the Squares
- Intercepts vehicle traffic before it reaches core areas in both Squares. This type of signage will direct people to parking resources that are less easy to find (i.e. Wells Lot) and cuts down on traffic in the Square
- The Town can offer standardized signage to private landowners as a voluntary program, who otherwise may not be able to place signs on the sidewalk or public way



The signs above are examples of wayfinding designs that intercept drivers, direct parkers to shops, and even provide walk times. The above maps of each Square contain potential locations for intercept and wayfinding signage.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Work with Owners of Privately Owned Off-Street Lots for Potential Shared Parking Opportunities

OVERVIEW

Shared parking agreements can open up private parking supply, providing additional public parking during times of peak parking demand. In both Watertown and Coolidge Squares, private lots have the potential to alleviate parking congestion if they become open to the public when underutilized. In the future, shared parking within the Squares can support new development without building more supply.

ACTION ITEMS

- Identify opportunities for shared parking in underutilized private lots
- Pursue shared parking agreements with private owners
- Develop a program to provide public incentives for private lot owners to share lots, such as snow clearance, shared meter revenue, and sign installations
- Develop a sample shared parking agreement and have it available at Town Hall



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Private parking is underutilized during peak hours
- Many private lots are empty at the same time that restaurants are at peak demand
- There are few incentives to share parking
- There is no seamless shared parking program



The Town can give a business or property owner parking signage that contains information on when the public can use private parking facilities and where they are allowed to park

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

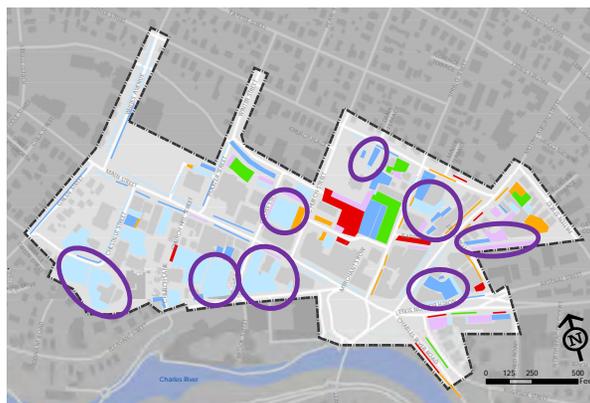
7. Work with Owners of Privately Owned Off-Street Lots for Potential Shared Parking Opportunities



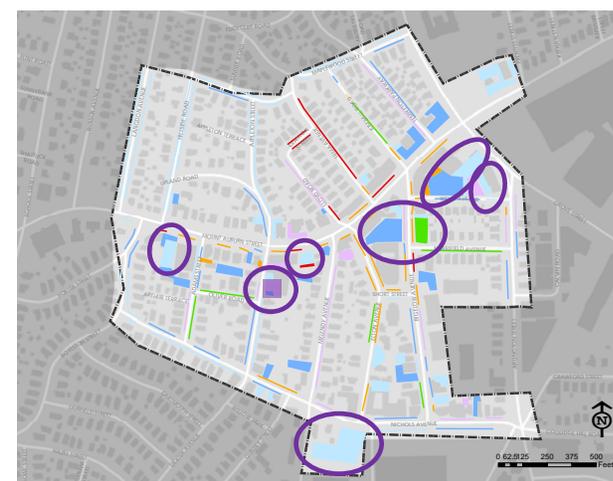
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Creating more flexible and available off-street parking in Coolidge Square will significantly alleviate the lack of available on-street parking on Mt Auburn Street, especially during peak hours
- Increases the public parking inventory without adding costs or using more land
- Gives the public access to underutilized parking lots available during peak times (midday weekdays and weekends) such as:
 - **Watertown Square:** Dunkin Donuts/Belmont Savings Bank, Santander Bank, and Watertown Savings Banks (off of Pleasant Street and Summer Street)
 - **Coolidge Square:** Hellenic Cultural Center, CVS, Citizen's Bank, Watertown Savings Bank, Nichols Avenue spaces

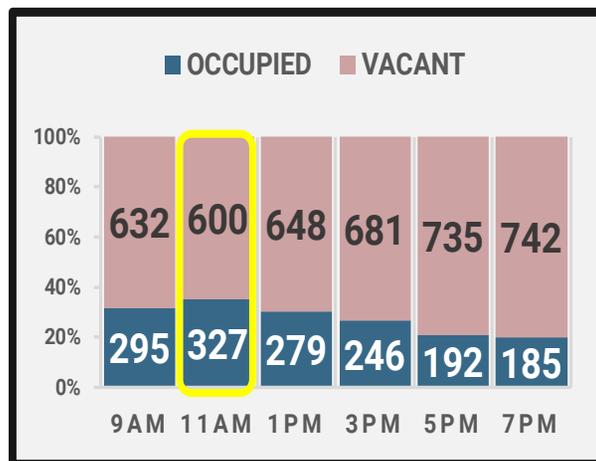
WATERTOWN SQUARE



COOLIDGE SQUARE

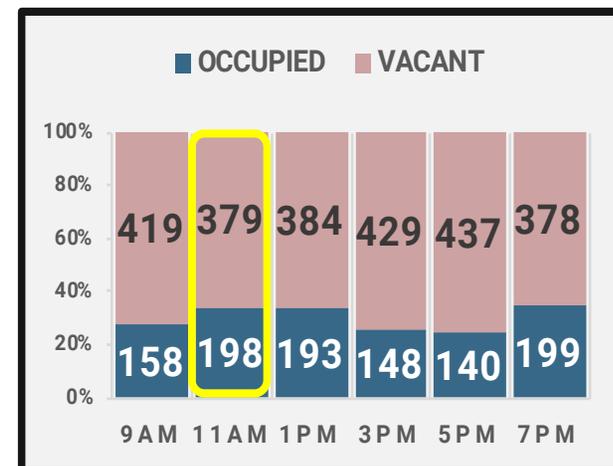


Private Off-Street Parking



In Watertown Square, private lots including the Verizon/SuperCuts, the Santander Bank, and the Dunkin Donuts/Belmont Savings Bank are underutilized on weekend evenings

Private Off-Street Parking



In Coolidge Square, there are many largely vacant private lots adjacent to highly utilized public parking. In the weekend evenings, Coolidge Square lots such as the Watertown Savings Bank, Citizens and Hellenic Cultural Center all have over 70% vacancy, while on-street spaces are almost completely occupied.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Re-Direct Employee Parking Demand

OVERVIEW

Employees frequently park in prime spaces all day, while short-term users (customers) must park in less desirable locations. By creating designated employee spaces that are more remote, business employees in each Square park further away and create more availability of prime spaces for visitors.

ACTION ITEMS

- Designate employee parking zones
- Consider shared parking agreements in underutilized private lots for employees holding a permit
- Promote Local Business Permits in Coolidge Square
- Increase the number of Watertown Square Municipal Lot Local Business Permits
- Improve lighting and walking conditions to make remote lots more attractive (see Recommendations 5 and 6)



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Employees park all day in prime locations, closest to storefronts
- Employee permits are well utilized in Watertown Square, but underutilized in Coolidge Square
- Permit programs are not linked with parking payment system and regulations and therefore difficult to enforce
- Vacant private parking is not open to employees of other businesses
- 68% of Coolidge Square employees do not have designated parking spaces



“Employee parking only” areas can give employees designated parking areas, potentially opening up prime parking spaces in front of storefronts for Square visitors and customers

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

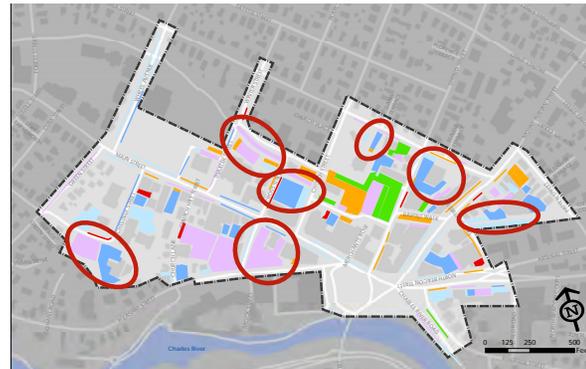
8. Re-Direct Employee Parking Demand



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Creating designated parking areas increases the availability of prime parking
- Increasing the number of Local Business permits in Watertown Square will give more employees the opportunity to purchase a permit and park in designated areas
- Reduces the parking pressure on Mt Auburn Street in Coolidge Square
- Directs Coolidge Square employee parking to available parking spaces along Nichols Avenue
- Private lot owners may be more willing to share their parking with a limited group (i.e. local employees, or local employees who hold a permit)
- Linking local business, municipal employee, and senior permits to the License Plate Recognition (LPR) system will increase the Town's ability to enforce regulations and understand trends

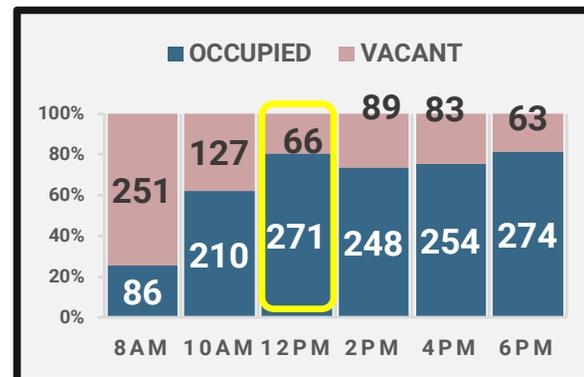
WATERTOWN SQUARE



COOLIDGE SQUARE

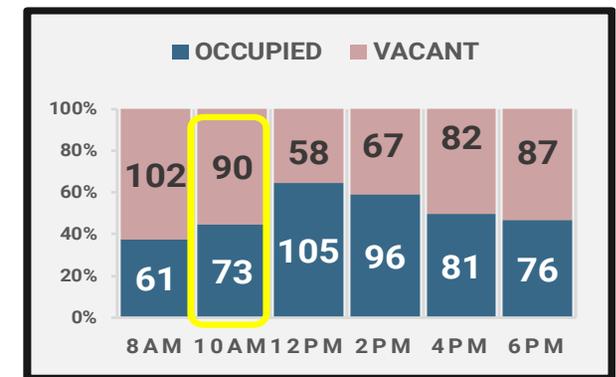


Public Off-Street Parking



As highlighted above, Watertown Square employees could park in underutilized lots or on-street in more remote areas, opening up parking for customers in currently busy public off-street parking spaces

Public On-Street Priced Parking



Give customers access to prime on-street parking along Mt Auburn Street by directing Coolidge Square employees to unoccupied lots as seen in the above map

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Reduce Parking Demand by Enhancing Access for Non-Vehicle Modes

OVERVIEW

Improved walking, biking, and transit amenities could decrease parking demand by encouraging some people to access the Squares without driving.

Investing in improvements to multimodal infrastructure and pedestrian connections will help to reduce pressure on parking resources in the core areas in both Squares. Enhancing lighting infrastructure in the study areas and at certain lots will help promote a more walkable, connected Town Square.

Both Squares have a walkable scale and a connected sidewalk network on major roads. This should be expanded wherever feasible to connect customers to shops, transit, and bicycle parking. The majority of public open house attendees and survey respondents want to see improvements to the walking environment and prefer to park once and walk or bike between destinations.



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- People on bikes do not have adequate infrastructure to park their bikes
- The current transit system feels unreliable to riders
- Off-street parking facilities are disconnected from storefronts

ACTION ITEMS

- Plan for more bicycle parking near businesses and commercial hubs
- Promote community multi-use paths with wayfinding signage
- Continue to improve transit access and operations, such as adding bus shelters and priority bus lanes
- Identify rideshare drop-off areas (i.e. Uber/Lyft)
- Work with the Bike & Pedestrian Committee to plan for more bicycle infrastructure (ex. street markings such as sharrows, dedicated bike lanes, and bicycle corrals), especially in Coolidge Square.
- Invest in additional crosswalks and pedestrian infrastructure between parking lots and stores to enhance walkability and safety in both Squares (ex. pedestrian walking paths, added lighting)
- Promote transit and carshare as alternate modes of transportation to destinations in the Square to decrease parking demand

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Reduce Parking Demand by Enhancing Access for Non-Vehicle Modes



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

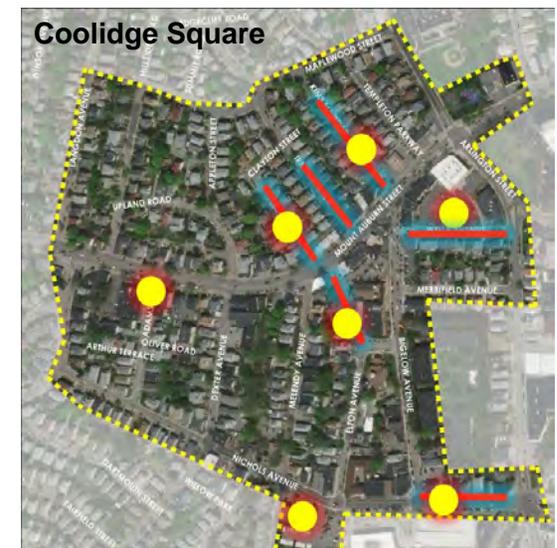
- Improving access by bicycles, transit, and walking will decrease demand for and reliance on private vehicle parking
- Modes such as transit, rideshare, carshare, walking, and biking require less parking while providing access for more people
- Enhanced safety improvements for people walking will decrease overall vehicle trips as well as promoting a “park once” environment, all of which helps decrease parking demand



25% of survey respondents want to see more bicycle infrastructure. Prioritizing bicycle improvements such as dedicated bike lanes and bicycle parking facilities can give those who bike an opportunity to visit the Squares without a car



Adding sidewalks and pedestrian paths in the Wells Avenue Municipal Lot would better connect parking facilities to storefronts along Mt Auburn Street



 = Lighting
 = Sidewalk improvement

Improving lighting and sidewalks in both Coolidge and Watertown Square can encourage visitors to walk to the Squares instead of driving

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Adjust Parking & Zoning Standards to Encourage Investment

OVERVIEW

Zoning regulations should support commercial uses. Rigid parking requirements make it hard for new businesses to locate in the Squares. Retail, restaurants, and other businesses the community desires in the Squares cannot locate there because zoning requires new businesses to provide parking on site. Many commercial lots are too small to provide parking. Updating parking standards can encourage new development that also promotes the use of alternate modes. The current parking requirements prioritize vehicles, which can deter business-friendly development.

ACTION ITEMS

- Consider changes to zoning to encourage new businesses, specifically:
 - Reduce or eliminate parking requirements
 - Allow developers to use payments in lieu of parking
 - Create a Parking Benefit District (PBD)
 - Establish a mechanism to regularly review regulations and monitor parking changes



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- Parking requirements are a barrier to new businesses locating in the commercial areas
- Zoning requires that valuable commercial land be devoted to parking, even though there are many vacant parking spaces even at peak times
- Zoning requirements for shared parking discourage its use
- Parking funds are not currently reinvested into the commercial areas

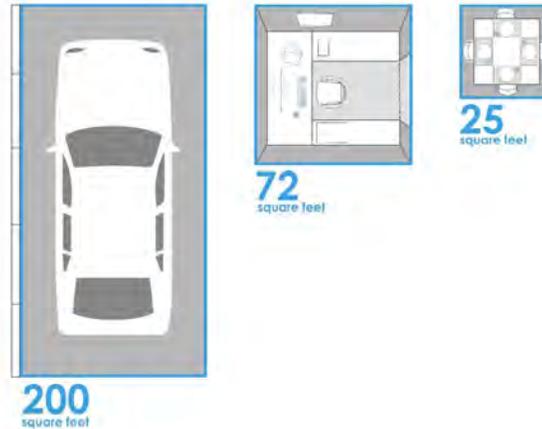
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Adjust Parking & Zoning Standards to Encourage Investment



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Reducing or eliminating parking requirements will facilitate new development focused on uses other than parking
- An in-lieu fee system creates flexibility for developers while allowing the Town to mitigate the impact of additional trips, whether through providing parking elsewhere or enhancing multimodal access
- Parking Benefit District (PBD) funds support improvements such as enhanced crosswalks, lighting, sidewalks, bicycle amenities, and new wayfinding signage
- Regular review of parking revenue and trends will allow the Town to adjust for changes and create availability
- A Parking Benefit District will help the Town fund improvements, and give the public a way to see the benefits of increased rates



Certain land uses in Watertown require more parking than the Institute of Transportation Engineers national standards, which requires developers to provide more parking than is necessary. If the Town reduced parking requirements, developers could use that space for residences, office space, new stores and restaurants, or green space.



Creating a Parking Benefit District can help dedicate funds for various Town Square improvements and give the public the opportunity to give input on how their parking money should be used



A parking meter sign in Pasadena, CA contains information on the Parking Benefit District, showing the public how their parking money funds transportation, multimodal, and pedestrian improvements