

Stoneham Downtown Parking Study - Final

Prepared for:



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December 31, 2021

**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
PARKING STUDY - FINAL**

Introduction
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Town of Stoneham is a community of 23,000 residents situated 10 miles north of Downtown Boston. Primarily a commuter suburb of Boston, it offers amenities such as parks, schools, libraries, a zoo, and a variety of restaurants, coffee shops and a theater located near Main Street in Stoneham's Historic Downtown. Its proximity to major highways (I-93 and I-95) and public transportation services offers convenient access to Boston and the broader North Shore.

1.2 STONEHAM TOWN CENTER STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

In 2014, a Strategic Action Plan for Stoneham's Town Center was developed to guide the evolution of Downtown Stoneham. To ensure that the future parking system further supports this evolution, the parking management strategy should align with these four goals:

Goal 2: A more inviting, attractive, and easily navigable public realm to increase awareness of Stoneham Town Center and its existing (and future) amenities.

Goal 3: An energized Town Center with great retail, entertainment, and service options.

Goal 4: A more robust, convenient, and efficient multi-modal transportation system to better connect Stoneham Square residents and businesses.

Goal 6: A greater diversity of housing options to meet market demand – particularly smaller senior and younger households interested in living in a walkable, amenity-rich Town Center environment

While the Town has already made progress on achieving these goals, such as forming important downtown committees to share collective knowledge and extending MBTA's Route 132 bus service into the evening hours to support workers and patrons of businesses like the Greater Boston Stage Company, more actions are needed to ensure that the parking system supports these long-range goals. Developing those actions and packaging them into a Parking Strategy is the purpose of this study.

1.3 PARKING STRATEGY GOALS

As with any municipality, a successful parking strategy for Stoneham should, once fully implemented, achieve the following goals:

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- a parking system that is easy to understand, use and manage
- an improved walking environment, including wayfinding
- allow customers to easily access businesses and services
- remove parking as a barrier to downtown development and revitalization
- integrate parking into the built environment so it works for all users

1.4 RELATED INITIATIVES, STUDIES & SURVEYS

1.4.1 Town Center Complete Streets Strategy Through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) created the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI), offering a range of services and assistance to communities such as Stoneham which were seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns.

As local growth and development efforts advanced within Stoneham Town Center, the Town recognized the need for a comprehensive "Complete Streets" strategy to improve the streetscape, safety, walkability, and economic development and growth. It applied for and was awarded a grant from MDI to devise a Complete Streets strategy through a three-month planning process. The study began with an examination of existing conditions to determine current roadway conditions and future needs. This was followed by a robust public outreach process, including stakeholder focus groups and a public design charrette. The input from the public outreach led directly to the development of a preliminary conceptual design (**Figure 1**) and, in consultation with Town officials, a final design and report.

In consultation with Town officials and key stakeholders, four primary goals were developed to guide the plan. These goals reflect the overall strategy guiding the Town's vision for the future development of its downtown streets:

1. Establish a complete street strategy to support downtown businesses to grow and flourish.
2. Achieve a vision for the downtown that articulates a walkable Town Center environment with mixed uses and open space.
3. Recommend streetscape and roadway improvements in the Town Center to safely accommodate users of all ages and abilities, including people who walk, bike, take transit, drive, and operate freight-sized vehicles.
4. Create a downtown corridor that maintains calm traffic, allows for increased access to local businesses, and improves the aesthetics of the streetscape.

The final plan included suggestions for multi-modal access and on-street parking.



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Figure 1: Main Street Concept Design

The Strategy also recommended pedestrian improvement opportunities based on best practices, and public survey results, including those summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Pedestrian & Cycling Improvement Opportunities

Pedestrian Opportunities	Sample Image	Cycling Opportunities	Sample Image
More street trees and green infrastructure, particularly along the south end of Main Street		U bike racks allow 2 bikes to be locked at a time and can be strategically located.	
Shorter pedestrian crossings by extending the existing curb by the width of the existing parking lane.		Bike corrals allow 10 or more bicycles to parking in the same space as a parking stall. There is less support for these at the time of this study.	

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<p>Crossing islands allow pedestrians to cross each direction of travel in two stages, with the opportunity to wait on the island.</p>		<p>Sharrows provide drivers with more awareness than they are sharing the space with a bicycle-friendly street.</p>	
<p>Connected sidewalk network with sidewalks or pathways on both sides of the street.</p>		<p>Permanent bicycle parking should be located outside of the sidewalk zone, be well-lit, and conveniently located.</p>	
<p>Curb ramps provide access for any pedestrian regardless of ability. They are required to meet ADA standards. Tactile treatment is to provide those with sight limitations to safely cross.</p>		<p>Longer-term bicycle parking should be covered, located where walking trips are short enough to complete the journey, and where there is high street activity.</p>	
<p>Crosswalk markings should be consistent to avoid confusion with stop bars and can be seen from a distance.</p>			
<p>Textured or colored crosswalk treatments can improve visibility and awareness of crossings. It can also help identify important intersection locations.</p>			
<p>Flat walkway where driveway slopes avoid the challenges experienced by cross-sloped sidewalks, particularly in winter conditions.</p>			
<p>Leading pedestrian interval provide advance time for pedestrians to begin crossing before traffic. It also improves pedestrian visibility.</p>			

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1.4.2 2016 Stoneham MBTA Survey

In 2016, a survey was undertaken by the Stoneham Transportation Advisory Committee (see image to right) to gather information around public transit needs. It concluded that most the common purpose for using transit is commuting, there is a need for increased transit frequency (e.g., evenings and weekends), and there is some need to re-examine bus zone locations.

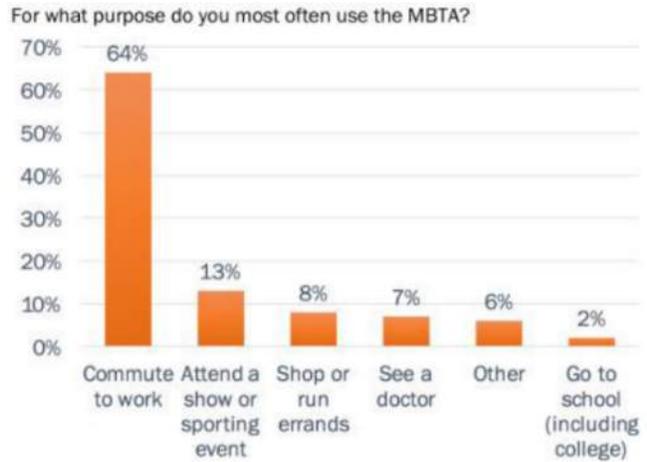


Figure 2: Transit Purpose Survey Question

1.5 RECENT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

1.5.1 Bicycle Rack Improvements

The Town of Stoneham has recently installed enhance, artistic permanent bicycle racks at popular destinations such as the new library, and the Town Common. Providing these amenities encourages users to cycle to these locations where they know they can keep their bicycle secure.



Figure 3: Library Bicycle Racks



Figure 4: Town Common Bicycle Racks

1.5.2 Tri-Community Greenway Improvements

Community volunteers have recently built amenity improvements along the Tri-Community Greenway (at Montvale Avenue and Pomeworth Street) which encourage more pedestrians and cyclists to travel along the greenway and to these convenient locations.

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Figure 5: Tri-Community Greenway Benches & Bike Racks

1.6 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this parking study within the Town Center are:

- Identify the current on-street and off-street parking inventory within the study area, including private vs. public regulations, time restrictions, accessible stalls, loading stalls.
- Determine the current (pre-pandemic) parking utilization within the study area and summarize graphically to identify those locations with low parking supply during peak times
- Engage key stakeholder and the public to help identify issues and opportunities.
- Identify active transportation issues and opportunities both within the study area and connecting to the larger Stoneham network.
- Examine future land use redevelopment within the study area and determine the change in public parking needs and recommend any changes to parking bylaw rates.
- Develop parking management strategies to make most efficient use of this limited public asset.

1.7 STUDY AREA AND DATA COLLECTION PERIODS

The study area as shown in **Figure 6** is roughly bounded by Montvale Avenue to the north, Hancock Street to the south, Wright Street to the west and Pine Street to the east.

Due to the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic and various business restrictions and/or closures in place, any parking utilization data collected in 2020 or early 2021 would be lower than historic (2019 and earlier) peak parking demands. To avoid this, historical aerial imagery queried from Google Earth was reviewed between 2010 and 2019 to determine the two highest demand (both on and off-street) images. Those were determined to be May 2016 and May 2019. Further review of those two periods indicates that May 2019 had slightly more parking activity. It was therefore selected for the analysis.

Although the exact day and time of the Google Earth aerial imagery isn't available, based on the data available, and our analysis, there is a high confidence that the May 2019 image was taken on a weekday midafternoon. Given that weekday utilization typically peaks around 11 AM or 12 PM, observations may be slightly lower (10-15%) than what could be expected during peak parking demand periods.

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2.0 OUTREACH

2.1 STAKEHOLDER SESSION

2.1.1 Overview

A virtual 1.5-hour presentation and Q&A session was held with key stakeholders in the community on the morning of June 14, 2021. The purpose of the session was to familiarize the stakeholders with the study, its purpose, and to gather their concerns and commentary to help inform the study. The Town of Stoneham invited a broad cross-section of stakeholders including the business community, the Chamber of Commerce, the Planning Board, and Town departments.

The session was attended by:

- Claudia Arnoff (Ceramica Paint Studio)
- Sharon Iovanni (Stoneham Bank)
- Monica Canova (Chamber of Commerce)
- Megan Day (Chamber of Commerce)
- Patricia Kilty (Resident)
- Brett Gonsalves (Public Works)
- Chris Senna (Chamber of Commerce)
- Gus Niewenhaus (Planning Board)
- James McIntyre (Police)
- Matt Grafton (Fire)
- Maria Sagarino (Town Clerk)

2.1.2 Presentation

Stantec provided an introductory project presentation prior to the interactive Issues & Opportunities part of the session using MURAL (Section 2.1.3) The full presentation is provided in **Appendix A**.

2.1.3 MURAL Board

A collaborative online whiteboard tool called MURAL was hosted by Stantec and allowed participants to place post-its, draw or write directly on a map of the study area. Stantec captured all issues, opportunities, and commentary on post-it notes that were verbally discussed.

A summary of the MURAL board comments is provided in **Appendix B**.

2.1.4 Key Points of Discussion

1. Primary Stoneham Square intersection poses traffic and parking problems

- Illegally parked cars in front of the Greater Boston Stage Company cause queues behind vehicles turning left onto Franklin Street

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2. Directionality, sidewalks, and parking restrictions on Central Street create problems

- Deliveries to Fire/Police stations block driveways as well as sight distance for cars exiting parking lot
- No sidewalks on eastern side, where parking lot is located
- Crosswalks recently installed at Emerson Street
- Drivers often turn against traffic at Emerson/Central

3. Crossing between Common and Post Office is insufficient

- Few accommodations – people cross anyway
- Vehicles can speed up to try to catch the light
- Existing accommodations may not be up to standard and/or not follow pedestrian desire lines

4. Main Street can get busy during peak periods (afternoons, late in week)

- Often drivers with blinkers on waiting for space(s) to free up
- May be lack of awareness of where parking is available
- Impacts Saturday morning with nearby fitness center
- At other times traffic is the issue, not parking

5. Elderly demographic profile of town requires more parking closer to destinations

- Walking long distances is not feasible
- Cars often double-park to drop off elderly passengers

6. Planning Board reference to 2002 parking study conduction for Town

- Study primarily dealt with Downtown capacity
- Referenced when Planning Board grants special parking permits for businesses
- Current practice is to share uses when demand profiles allow
- Problem when individuals use public parking instead of dedicated parking
- Some desire to construct a parking garage, but capacity issues are not present for this
- Planning Board leans heavily on Fire/Police opinion with development proposals

7. Pedestrian conditions in Downtown limit people's ability to walk

- Intersection of Main and Maple is particularly tricky
- Bicycle conditions should also be evaluated
- Bus stops have moved frequently late – tread cautiously

8. Unused parking on edges of Downtown is difficult to drive demand towards

- Spencer Street – haul to get to the Square and no cut-through to Main Street
 - Undefined curb on west side – requires potential reconstruction



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- Becomes parked at night with Fusion Taste and Theater traffic
- Warren Street – poor pedestrian conditions

9. Montvale and Main are a bottleneck

- Discussion about meeting Montvale and Pleasant, but gas station is significant obstacle
 - Signals should be coordinated in present state
- Eversource currently working on signal upgrades at this location
- Need to be careful about making traffic easier for cut-through movements and not Downtown commerce

10. Interest in shared parking, but difficult to arrange

- Large property on Spencer had declined to pursue opportunity
- Salem Five parking deck has leased space to some, but not others
 - Off-hour's use has been a significant hurdle
- Appetite for Town to step in and help facilitate shared parking arrangements

Additional Mural comments

- Crossings on Franklin need to be improved
- Wayfinding to direct motorists to Church and Common would support demand during events
- Connectivity opportunity from Greenway to Downtown
- Available parking outside of study area
- Potential to reduce required parking spaces
- Bike parking should be added to development projects

2.2 ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

2.2.1 Background

A public online survey was undertaken to gather information from Downtown Stoneham users about parking behaviors and identify current issues and future opportunities to improve the parking system. The survey questions, as posted, are provided in **Appendix C**.

2.2.2 Survey Results

The survey conducted online from June 14, 2021, to July 2, 2021, had 292 participants, with over 274 identifying themselves as residents of Stoneham, the zip code 02180 presenting as the most represented by far with 95% of respondents. The survey consisted of 12 questions

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aimed at better understanding perceptions and issues as it related to parking in the downtown.

Respondents provided several reasons for visiting downtown. As shown in **Figure 7**, the majority of respondents provided several reasons for visiting downtown, with only 7% providing only one reason for visiting. Of the responses over 70% of responses identifying "I go to appointments and/or run errands Downtown" and "I shop or go to restaurants Downtown", this theme provides most of the activity.

Additional trip descriptions provide the frequency of visit and duration of visits. **Figure 8** shows that 54% of respondents identify that they travel to Downtown either "Every day" or "Multiple times per week". **Figure 9** shows that 85% of respondents visit for 2 hours or less when they visit. These demographics reveal that the majority of visitors to Downtown fit within the currently existing framework, as anyone currently parking is affected by the existing 2-hour parking maximum. **Figure 10** notes that 90% of respondents are typically able to park at their destination or within a block or two.

Figure 11 shows that a majority of respondents, 82%, identified either "Sometimes, it can take an extra minute or so" or "Never, I find a space right away every time" when finding parking. **Figure 12** indicates that 48% of respondents park "Off-Street in a public lot" and 44% park "On-Street", a relatively even split. These responses suggest that parking is generally available where users are looking for parking, which is further observed in **Figure 13**. This all provides an understanding that the parking provided currently suits their needs. This observation was further re-enforced by the fact that more respondents stated that the parking situation was good, verses those that identified more parking was required, in response to an open-ended question.

Ninety-four percent of respondents identified that they do not have a Town-issued parking placard. A general observation from responses in the open-ended questions indicated that people were unaware of the placard system. Other general observations from the open-ended question reveal that there is significant concern in crossing Main Street for pedestrians, a need for longer parking for several businesses and a request to keep parking free.

When asked about other, non-parking issues, respondents indicated that "no nearby crosswalks" (39%), inadequate lighting (19%), and insufficient sidewalks (14%) are the top three issues that a parking management strategy need to consider.

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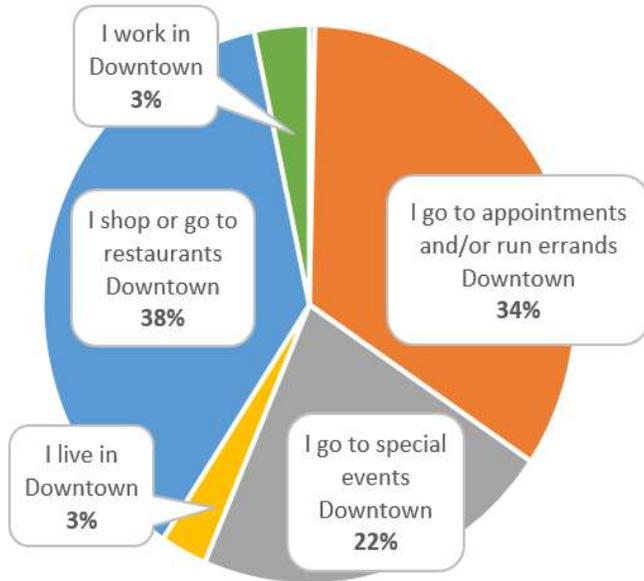


Figure 7 Reasons for Visiting (responses)

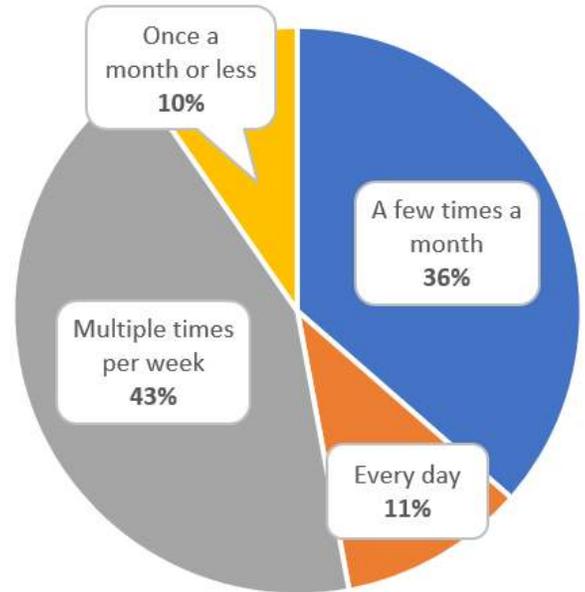


Figure 8 Frequency of Visit (responses)

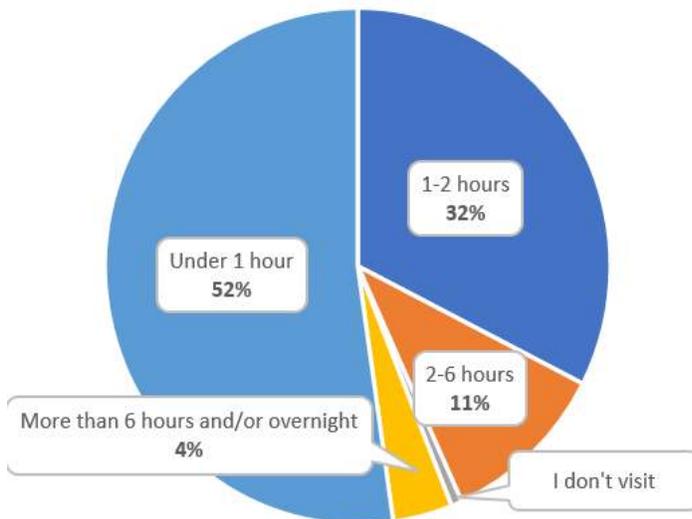


Figure 9 Duration of Visit (responses)

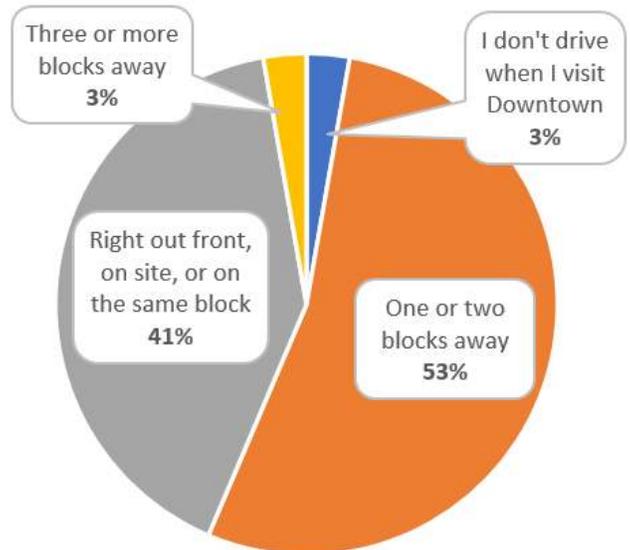


Figure 10 Parking Proximity (responses)

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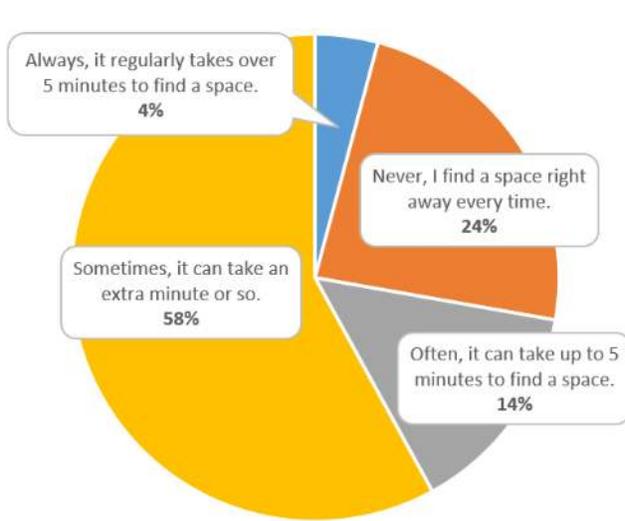


Figure 11 Ease of Finding Parking (responses)

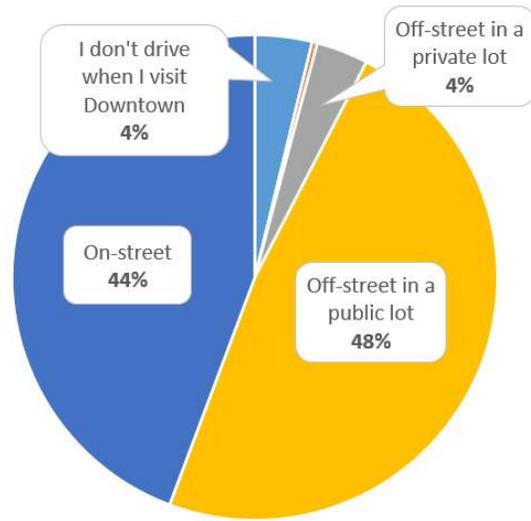


Figure 12 Type of Parking (responses)

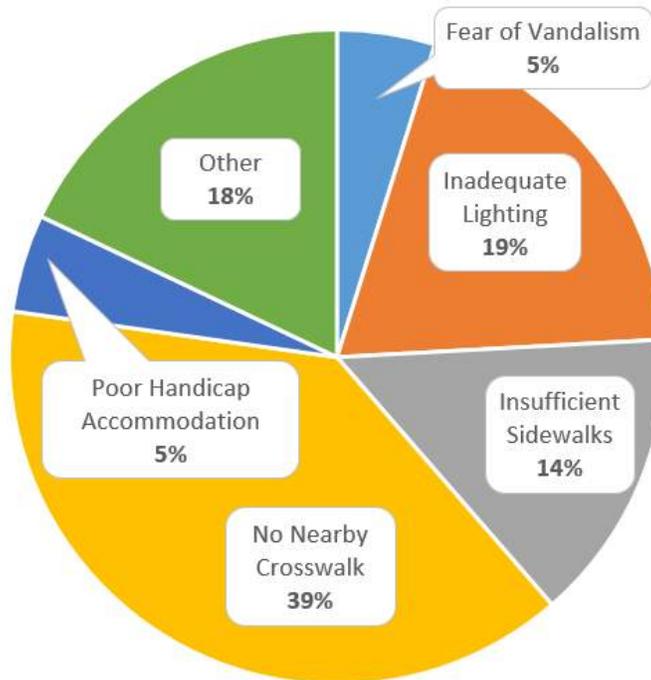


Figure 13 Other Issues (responses)

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Current Parking Conditions
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3.0 CURRENT PARKING CONDITIONS

3.1 STUDY AREA CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics of each of the study areas are as follows:

3.1.1 Land Use Districts

The land use districts for Downtown Stoneham as set forth by the Town's Zoning Code are illustrated below in **Figure 14** and described in **Table 2**

Table 2 Stoneham Land Use Districts			
	District	Chapter 15 (Zoning) Section (Code of the Town of Stoneham)	Permitted Uses (by right)
	Residence A	4.2	One-family dwellings
	Residence B	4.3	One or two-unit family dwelling
	Business	4.5	Bank, department store, restaurant, hotel, theater,
	Central Business District	4.6	Same uses as Business District. Dwellings permitted 2 nd floor (or half of 1 st floor)
	Residential/Business Overlay	4.17	Residential uses on all floors provided no more than 5 dwelling units in building.



Figure 14 Current Land Use Districts – Downtown Stoneham

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3.1.2 Main Street On-Street Parking

A significant portion of the public on-street parking within the study area is situated along Main Street. It is conveniently located in front of businesses (retail shops, restaurants, services).

Parking not permitted at locations where there is a high density of driveways or additional travel lane capacity is required in advance of intersections (e.g., north of Common Street on the east side of Main Street).

Parking is not permitted in the vicinity of the large offset four-leg intersection formed by Main Street, Central Street, and Franklin Street, with the exception of the western side of Main Street in front of the theater. This is largely to preserve intersection vehicular operations and to provide a safer environment for the high pedestrian activity in this area.

3.1.3 Other On-Street Parking

Outside of Main Street, a large portion of public on-street parking is situated along Winter Street (angled parking), Church Street, and Central Street (recently converted to mostly angled parking) where much of the downtown destinations are congregated (Town Hall, Town Common, etc.).

3.1.4 Off-Street Parking

Most off-street parking lots are small in size, private, intended to serve customers for the businesses along Main Street, and are situated in the rear. Larger surface lots are located in the eastern and southeastern portion of the study area and are necessarily designated or advertised as "public". There is only one parking structure (two-level) situated off Hersam Street, and it is private for bank customers only.

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3.2 PARKING INVENTORY

3.2.1 On-Street

The on-street parking inventory data has been organized by blocks and includes both sides of the street. Time restrictions have been provided (examples shown in Error! Reference source not found.). "Other" spaces refer to accessible spaces, loading, etc. and do not count toward the publicly available on-street space count. The on-street inventory is summarized in **Table 3** and shown graphically in

Table 3 On-Street Parking Inventory¹					
Street	Direction	Limits	# Spaces (Public)	# Spaces (Other)	Restrictions
Main St	N-S	Montvale - Franklin	45	1	2 Hour Limit
Main St	N-S	Franklin - Hancock	41	1	2 Hour Limit
Central St	N-S	Pleasant - Main St	48	0	15 Min. Limit
Pleasant St	E-W	Main St – Pine St	13	0	No Limit
Common St	E-W	Main St – Pine St	13	0	2 Hour Limit
Church St	E-W	Main St - Central St	14	2	2 Hour Limit
Winter St	E-W	Main St - Central St	21	2	2 Hour Limit or Permit
Hersam St	E-W	Wright St - Main St	11	0	No Limit
Emerson St	E-W	Central St - Pine St	17	0	2 Hour Limit
Franklin St	E-W	Main St - Pine St	19	0	30 Min. Limit
Warren St	N-S	Maple St - Hancock St	30	0	2 Hour Limit
Spencer St	N-S	Franklin St - Hancock St	33	0	No Limit
TOTAL			305	6	

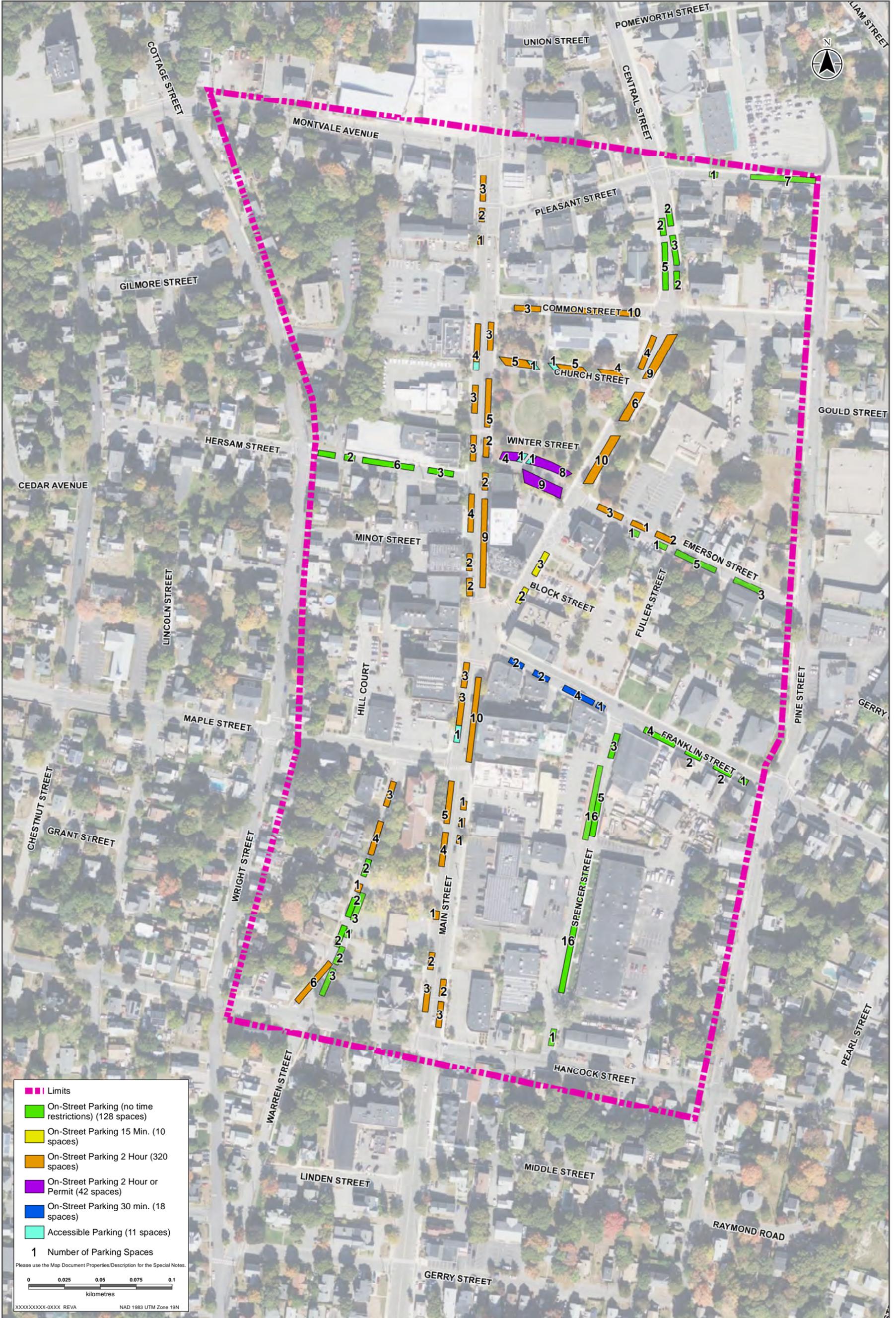
¹ Parking Inventories are approximate. As the on-street parking areas are not designated parking spaces, variations due to vehicle types, lengths and spacing between vehicles may impact the available inventory.

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Current Parking Conditions
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Figure 15: Examples of Parking Time Restrictions





Sources: Base Data - Natural Earth; Thematic Data - ERBC
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On-Street Parking Inventory & Restrictions

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3.2.2 Off-Street

The off-street parking inventory data has been organized into specific lots. Lots with no public parking provision have not been included in **Table 4** Note that many of these lots may have specific restrictions that permit only customers to which that lot is assigned. These are still considered “publicly accessible”.

Table 4 Off-Street Parking Inventory¹			
Location	Type	Business	# Spaces (Publicly Accessible)
10-20 Spencer St	Surface Lot	Industrial	96
16 Franklin St	Surface Lot	Fuller Street Public Lot	85
19 Franklin St	Stacked Parking	Fusion Taste	4
21 Spencer St	Surface Lot	Lake Contracting	4
24 Spencer St	Surface Lot	NE MFG	25
25 Central St	Surface Lot	Fire Station	2
26-36 Emerson St	Surface Lot	Emerson Street Public Lot	87
3 Pleasant Street	Surface Lot		9
307 Main Street	Surface Lot	Hong Kong City, Boston Trade Center, The Book Oasis	9
308 Main Street	Surface Lot	Main Gas Station	15
319 Main Street	Surface Lot	Cleveland Building Pignones Cafe	16
32 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Fuller House of Stoneham	8
322 Main Street	Surface Lot	MacDonald Funeral Home	2
325 Main Street	Surface Lot	Bank of America	40
335 Main Street	Surface Lot	Multi-Tenanted - MZO Group, NV Salon, Chamber of commerce, Yoga Moves, Remax Andrews	32
345 Main Street	Surface Lot	USPS	41

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35 Central Street	Surface Lot	Stoneham Town Hall	19
35 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	Industrial	5
359 Main Street	Structured Parking	Salem Five	56
365 Main Street	Surface Lot	Zizza Insurance	5
367 Main Street	Surface Lot	Curtain Time, Smokey's Longhorn Cafe	14
375 Main Street	Surface Lot	Serenety Salon and spa, Firicano Fitness Center	12
379-383 Main Street	Surface Lot	Watch Maker and vacant	9
380 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mixed Use Ceramico, The Stones	14
39 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	17
4 Common Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, primarily residential, Anderson-Bryant Funeral Home	3
408 - 420 Main Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	6
41 - 47 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	10
411 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mixed Use Mathew Cunningham LA	34
422 Main Street	Surface Lot	Pediatric Dental Care	4
425 Main Street	Surface Lot	DB Central Beverage	24
426 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mixed Use, Catalano PC, Lapriore Insurance	49
430 Main Street	Surface Lot	RCN	32
436 - 438 Main Street	Surface Lot	Residential - Multi-Family	6
440 Main Street	Surface Lot	Men's Room, Fire Up Fitness, Karate Tai Chi, Rlume Skin Spa	11
444 Main Street	Surface Lot	Ace Hardware	33

**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
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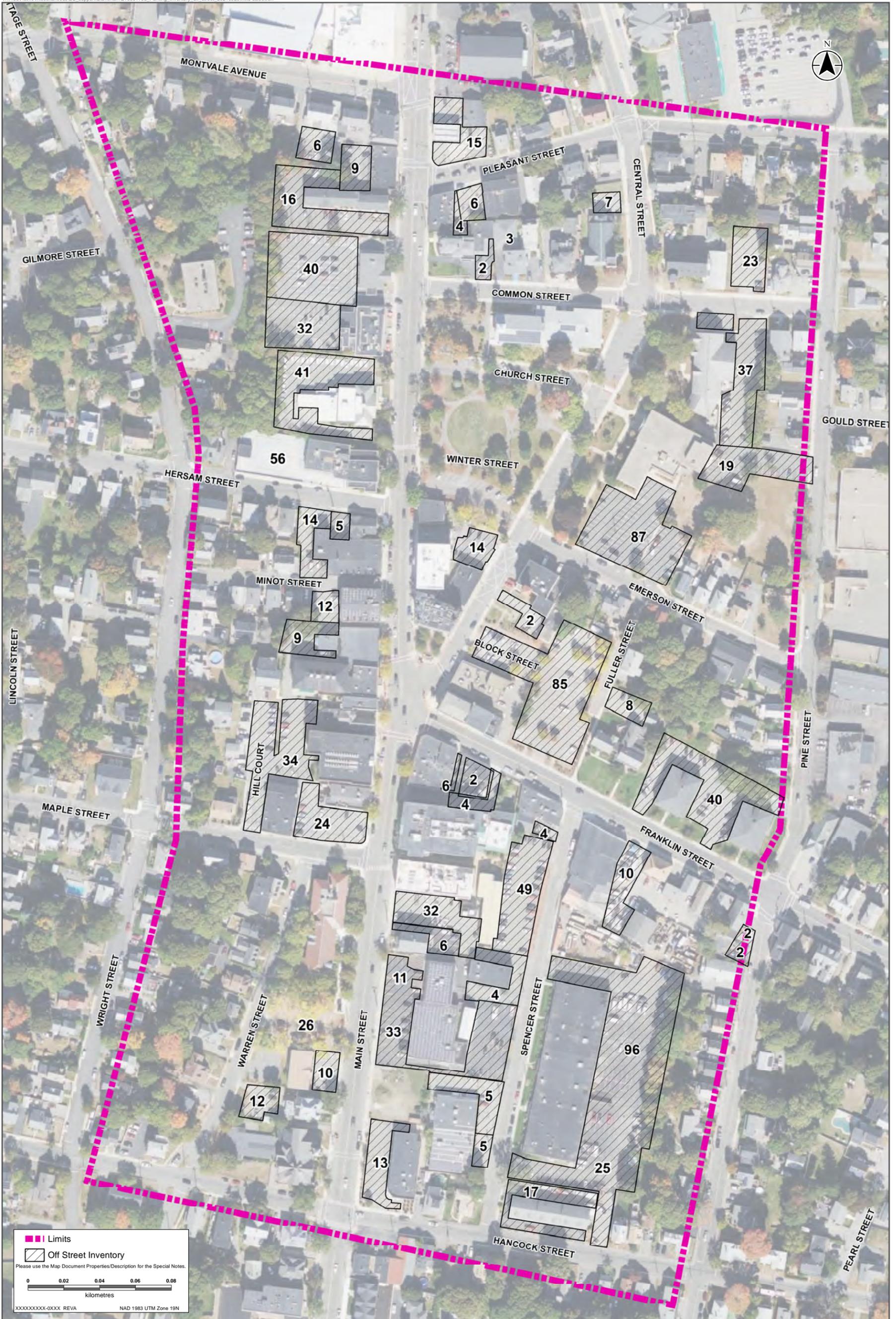
445 Main Street	Surface Lot	Library	26
450 Main Street	Surface Lot	Open land	5
451 Main Street	Surface Lot	Michael's hair, Pawsitively Clean, Dance Exhilaration, Born Pretty Nail	10
455 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, primarily residential	12
456 Main Street	Surface Lot	Goodyear	13
457 Main Street	Surface Lot	First Baptist Church- Stoneham	2
5 Pleasant Street	Surface Lot	Ultimate Design Embroidery	6
50 Central Street	Surface Lot	Faith Quest Community Church	7
59 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	2
6 - 8 Montvale Avenue	Surface Lot	Mixed Use, Residential, Art Gourment	6
61 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, primarily residential	2
7 - 11 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, other	2
TOTAL			931

¹ Parking Inventories are approximate. As the on-street parking areas are not designated parking spaces, variations due to vehicle types, lengths and spacing between vehicles may impact the available inventory.

An example off-street parking lot is shown in **Figure 17**. The off-street parking lots, addresses, and parking stall quantities are shown graphically in **Figure 18**



Figure 17: Example Off-Street Parking Lot



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Off-Street Parking Inventory

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3.3 PARKING UTILIZATION

Parking utilization for the on-street parking supply is summarized in **Table 5** and shown graphically in **Figure 20**. Parking utilization for the off-street parking supply is summarized in **Table 6** and shown graphically in **Figure 20** as well. Cells in the utilization column have been color coded to match the legend of **Figure 20**.

3.3.1 On-Street

Table 5 On-Street Parking Utilization (Peak Period)					
Street	Side	Limits	#Occupied Spaces	Space Inventory	%Utilization
Main Street	West	Montvale - Franklin	12	21	57%
Main Street	East	Montvale - Franklin	17	25	68%
Main Street	West	Franklin - Hancock	8	24	33%
Main Street	East	Franklin - Hancock	10	18	56%
Central St	West	Pleasant - Main St	1	11	9%
Central St	East	Pleasant - Main St	11	37	30%
Pleasant St	North	Main St – Pine St	2	13	15%
Common St	South	Main St – Pine St	0	13	0%
Church St	North	Main St - Central St	8	16	50%
Winter St	North	Main St - Central St	12	14	86%
Winter St	South	Main St - Central St	9	9	100%
Hersam St	North	Wright St - Main St	11	11	100%
Emerson St	North	Central St - Pine St	3	7	43%
Emerson St	South	Central St – Pine St	8	10	80%
Franklin St	South	Main St - Pine St	15	19	79%
Warren St	East	Maple St - Hancock St	0	9	0%
Warren St	West	Maple St - Hancock St	0	21	0%
Spencer St	East	Franklin St - Hancock St	13	26	50%
Spencer St	West	Franklin St - Hancock St	6	7	86%
TOTAL			146	311	47%



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Figure 19: Main Street & Central Street Intersection

3.3.2 Off-Street

Table 6 Off-Street Parking Utilization (Peak Period)					
Location	Type	Business(es)	#Occupied Spaces	Space Inventory	% Utilization
10-20 Spencer St	Surface Lot	Industrial	35	96	36%
16 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Fuller Street Public Parking Lot	52	85	61%
19 Franklin Street	Stacked Parking	Fusion Taste	4	4	100%
21 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	Lake Contracting	6	4	150%
24 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	NE MFG.	10	25	40%



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25 Central Street	Surface Lot	Fire Station	2	2	100%
26 - 36 Emerson Street	Surface Lot	Emerson Street Public Parking Lot	24	87	28%
3 Pleasant Street	Surface Lot		1	9	11%
307 Main Street	Surface Lot	Hong Kong City, Boston Trade Center, The Book Oasis	11	9	122%
308 Main Street	Surface Lot	Main Gas Station	10	15	67%
319 Main Street	Surface Lot	Cleveland Building Pignones Cafe	13	16	81%
32 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Fuller House of Stoneham	3	8	38%
322 Main Street	Surface Lot	MacDonald Funeral Home	2	2	100%
325 Main Street	Surface Lot	Bank of America	25	40	63%
335 Main Street	Surface Lot	Multi-Tenanted - MZO Group, NV Salon, Chamber of commerce, Yoga Moves, Remax Andrews	19	32	59%
345 Main Street	Surface Lot	USPS	25	41	61%
35 Central Street	Surface Lot	Stoneham Town Hall	13	19	68%
35 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	Industrial	3	5	60%
365 Main Street	Surface Lot	Zizza Insurance	2	5	40%
367 Main Street	Surface Lot	Curtain Time, Smokey's Longhorn Cafe	6	14	43%
375 Main Street	Surface Lot	Serenety Salon and spa, Firicano Fitness Center	5	12	42%
379-383 Main Street	Surface Lot	Watch Maker and vacant	5	9	56%
380 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mxd Use Ceramico, The Stones	6	14	43%
39 Spencer Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	6	17	36%

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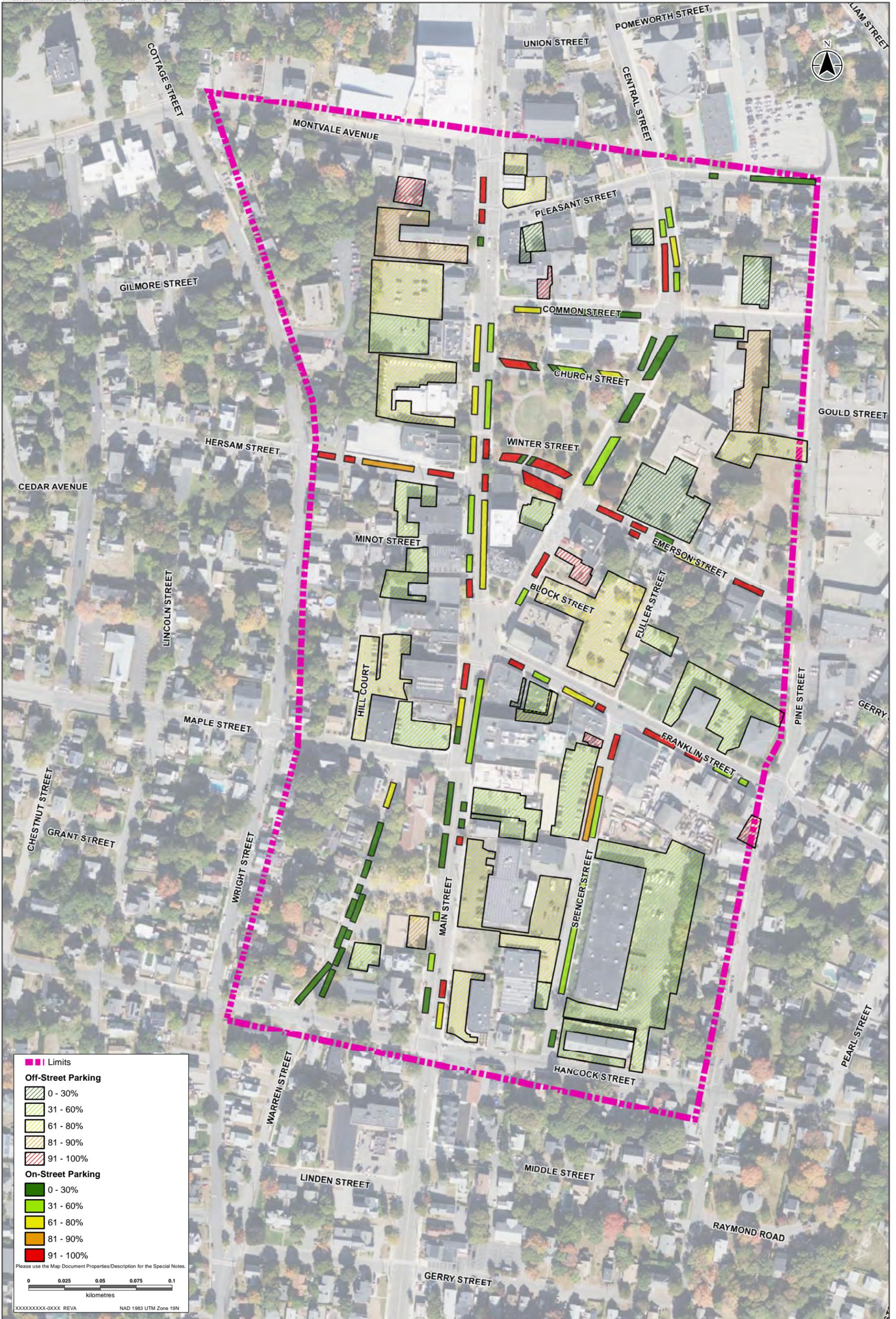
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408 - 420 Main Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	1	6	17%
41 - 47 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Commercial	13	10	130%
411 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mxd Use Mathew Cunningham LA	23	34	68%
422 Main Street	Surface Lot	Pediatric Dental Care	3	4	75%
425 Main Street	Surface Lot	DB Central Beverage	9	24	38%
426 Main Street	Surface Lot	MXD Use, Catalano PC, Lapriore Insurance	19	49	39%
430 Main Street	Surface Lot	RCN	18	32	56%
436 - 438 Main Street	Surface Lot	Residential - Multi-Family	2	6	33%
440 Main Street	Surface Lot	Men's Room, Fire Up Fitness, Karate Tai Chi, Rlume Skin Spa	8	11	73%
444 Main Street	Surface Lot	Ace Hardware	11	33	33%
445 Main Street	Surface Lot	Library	10	26	38%
450 Main Street	Surface Lot	Open land	4	5	80%
451 Main Street	Surface Lot	Michael's hair, Pawsitively Clean, Dance Exhilaration, Born Pretty Nail	9	10	90%
455 Main Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, primarily residential	4	12	33%
456 Main Street	Surface Lot	Goodyear	9	13	69%
5 Pleasant Street	Surface Lot	Ultimate Design Embroidery	1	6	17%
6 - 8 Montvale Avenue	Surface Lot	Mixed Use, Residential, Art Gourment	6	6	100%
7 - 11 Franklin Street	Surface Lot	Mixed use, other	1	2	50%
TOTAL			439	931	47%



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On-Street & Off-Street Parking Utilization

3.4 PARKING ANALYSIS

3.4.1 On-Street

Figure 20 shows that there are some localized areas with high on-street parking utilization at the time occupancy data was collected (afternoon, May 2019). Specifically,

- North and south side of Winter Street between Main Street and Central Street (adjacent to the Common): 21 of 23 spaces occupied (91% utilized)
- North side of Hersman Street between Wright Street and Central Street: 11 of 11 spaces occupied (100% utilized)
- West side of Spencer Street between Franklin Street and Hancock Street: 6 of 7 spaces occupied (86% utilized)
- Localized pockets over 90% utilized along Main Street, Emerson Street, and Franklin Street

Of the 311 publicly available parking spaces, however, only 146 (47% utilization) are occupied. Given the variability of parking demand on any specific day it is beneficial to consider the sensitivity of additional demand. To reach the next parking utilization category illustrated in **Figure 20** (moderate, 61-80%), would require 190 occupied spaces, or an additional 44 vehicles. Since parking utilization of a study area is considered high once 85-90% is reached, the on-street parking demand for the study area is low with over half of the supply still available.

3.4.2 Off-Street

Figure 20 shows that there are a few smaller off-street parking lots with high utilization at the time occupancy data was collected (afternoon, May 2019). Specifically:

- Fusion Taste off Franklin Street: 4 of 4 spaces occupied (100% utilized)
- Lake Contracting off Spencer Street: 6 of 4 spaces occupied (over 100% utilized)
- Fire Station off Central Street: 2 of 2 spaces occupied (100% utilized)
- The Book Oasis (and other retailers) off Main Street: 11 of 9 spaces occupied (over 100% utilized)
- MacDonald Funeral Home off Main Street: 2 of 2 spaces occupied (100% utilized)
- Commercial Lot off Franklin Street: 13 of 10 spaces occupied (over 100% utilized)
- Michael's Hair (and other retailers) off Main Street: 9 of 10 spaces occupied (90% utilized)
- Art Gourmet off Montvale Ave: 6 of 6 spaces occupied (100% utilized)

Of the 931 publicly available parking spaces, however, only 439 (47% utilization) are occupied. Given the variability of parking demand on any specific day it is beneficial to consider the sensitivity of additional demand. To reach the next parking utilization category illustrated in **Figure 20** (moderate, 61-80%), would require 569 occupied spaces, or an additional 130 vehicles.

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Since parking utilization of a study area is considered high once 85-90% is reached, the off-street parking demand for the study area is low with over half of the supply still available.

3.5 PARKING DURATION

Field data collection for parking duration during the summer of 2021 would have been unreliable due to the impacts of COVID-19 on residents and businesses. However, a public survey question on length of stay was asked and provides useful information on short vs. long-stay parking behavior (**Figure 21**)

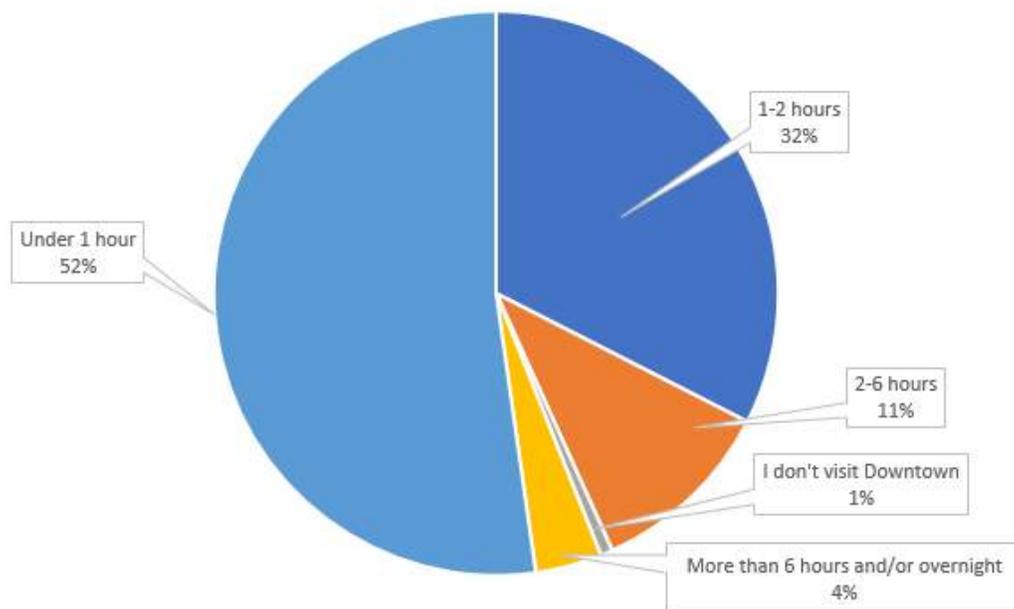


Figure 21 Length of Parking Stay (Public Survey)

As **Figure 21** shows, the majority are parking for a short (less than 1 hour) time period. This suggests that most are making a quick stop to one or two of the businesses before leaving the area. About one-third are staying 1-2 hours which may suggest that people are dining, staying for a coffee meeting, etc. Of the remaining respondents, about 10% are staying between 2-6 hours which may reflect employees that work in the area. The 5% staying overnight may reside in the study area.

In conclusion, based on the survey, parking turnover is frequent as 85% are staying less than 2 hours.

3.6.2 Existing Pedestrian Network

The majority of streets within the study area have sidewalks on both sides. There are, however, some gaps in the sidewalk network or need for upgrading. Specifically,

- Maple Street between Hill Court and Wright Street (both sides)
- Hancock Street between Main Street and Warren Street (north side)
- Spencer Street between Hancock Street and Franklin Street (both sides for majority of section)
- Various oversized-driveway locations where pedestrians need to cross throughout the study area.

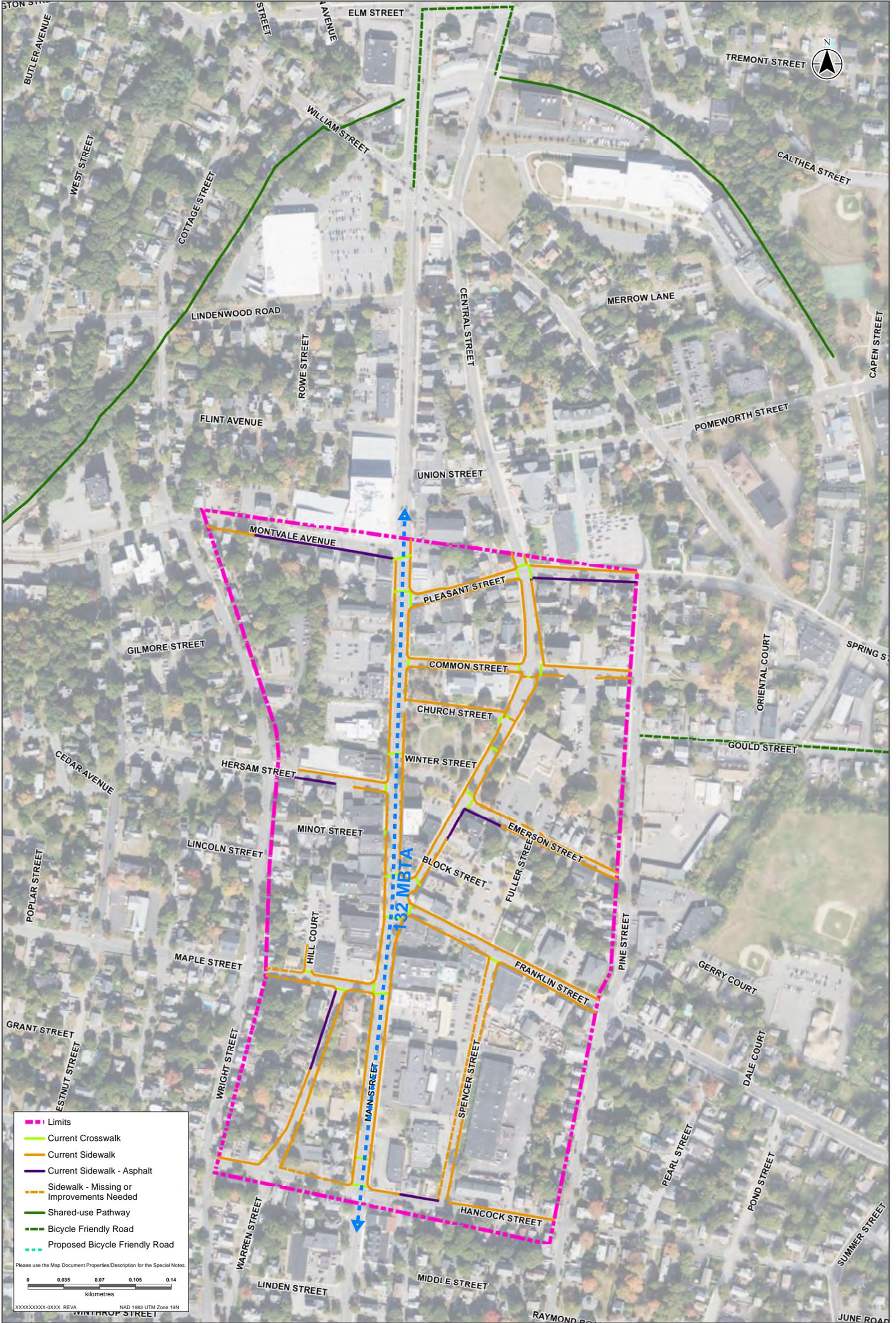
Three noteworthy locations:

- Church Street (south side) has no sidewalk but is adjacent to the Common Park space which has east-west pedestrian connectivity.
- Winter Street (both sides) has no sidewalks but is adjacent to the Common Park space which has east-west pedestrian connectivity.
- Central Street (east side) has a long curb-cut across the firehouse where pedestrians may be dangerously exposed to fire apparatus operations and walking is discouraged.

Most intersections have pedestrian crossings but require further investigation to ensure the presence of pedestrian crossing markings, smooth pavement, accessible ramps, and good sightlines.

There are two existing midblock crossings across Main Street that require relocation as their proximity to existing intersections do not follow best practice design principles.

A map of the existing pedestrian and cycling network is shown in **Figure 24**.



Existing Active Transportation Network

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3.6.3 Amenities & Destinations

As shown in **Figure 25**, Stoneham has several local parks located just east of downtown. The largest park, Middlesex Fells Reservation, and Stone Zoo are located approximately 1 mile to the south. Stoneham High School and its athletic fields are located about ½ mile southeast of downtown. All other major destinations are situated in the heart of Downtown, typically along Main Street.

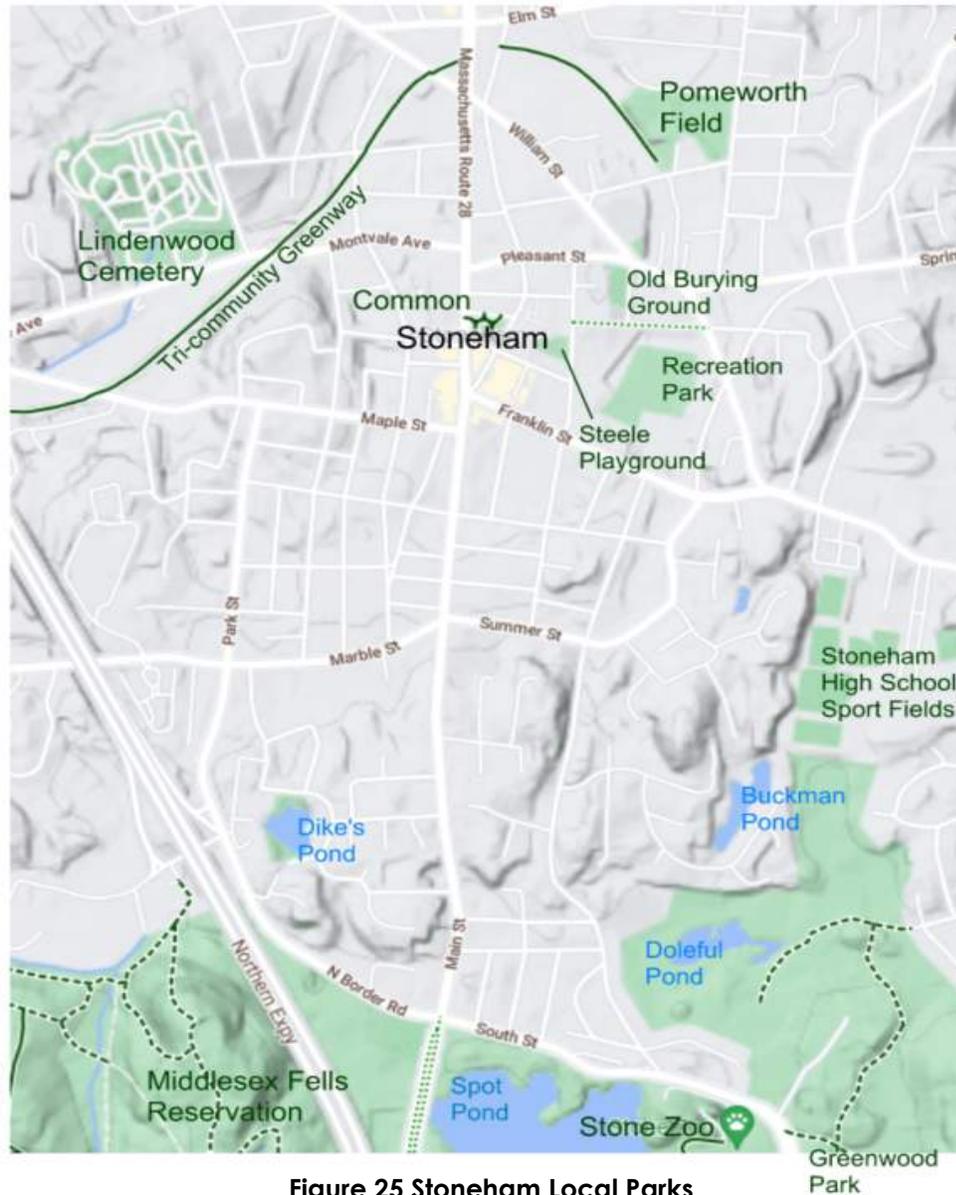


Figure 25 Stoneham Local Parks



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Stoneham Town Common is a centrally located park with amenities including a central area for Farmer's Markets and other activities, gazebo, park benches, and is situated across Central Street from Stoneham Town Hall.

Figure 26: Stoneham Town Common

Middlesex Fells Reservation is a public recreation area covering over 2,200 acres. The park surrounds 5 reservoirs and has over 100 miles of mixed-use trails for hiking and walking. Other activities include boating, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, fishing, and horseback riding.



Figure 27 Middlesex Fells Reservation Trails

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3.6.4 Current Active User Desire Lines (Strava)

Strava, a GPS athletic-focused platform and application that tracks people's routes, has a publicly available global heat map. The heat map shows the routes of highest activity by users (walkers, joggers, cyclists). Though it only represents a small proportion of the actual users, it is helpful in showing higher use corridors.

Figure 28 shows cycling activity. The Tri-Community Trail shows the most activity. There is also a high level of activity along Main Street, and a moderate level on Wright Street and Central Street. For east-west travel cyclists are using Montvale, Maple, Pleasant, and Franklin, though it is very likely that these users are confident riders on these busier corridors.

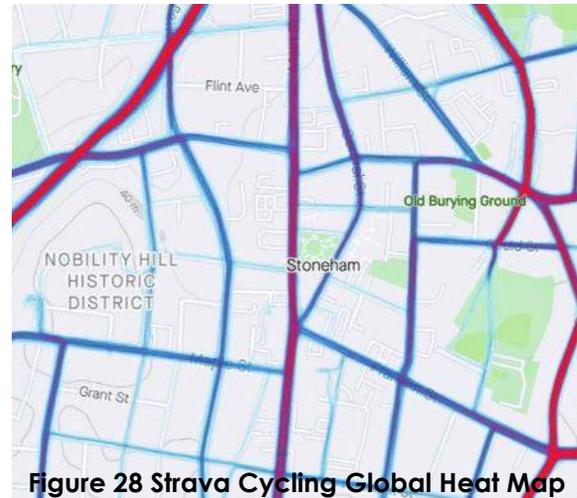


Figure 29 shows pedestrian activity. Again, the Tri-Community Trail shows the most activity. There is also a high level of activity along Main Street (on both sides) and Franklin Street. It is interesting to note the Montvale and Pleasant don't have the same activity level as cycling, likely due to the busier, less pedestrian-friendly corridors.



3.6.5 Opportunities

Two routes have potential for better connectivity between the Tri-Community Greenway and Main Street. These are:

1. Wright Street between the Tri-Community Greenway south to Hersam Street. Hersam Street between Wright Street and Main Street. This utilizes lower volume residential streets and connects the Greenway to the central Downtown area (e.g., Common). Special intersection treatment may have to be given to Wright's crossing of Montvale Avenue, a busier street, like those at the trail crossing.
2. From the existing Gould Street bike-friendly road, Pine Street south to Emerson Street and Emerson Street to Central Street. This provides connect from the east to the same central Downtown area.

These are shown later in the report in **Figure 36**.

4.0 LAND USE AND ZONING ANALYSIS

This section discusses how today's parking requirements in Downtown Stoneham compare to regional and national precedents. Zoning standards in Downtown are also evaluated to discuss the potential for future development in Downtown. A shared parking demand analysis is detailed with two potential build-out scenarios for the community.

4.1 PARKING RATES

Minimum parking space requirements are reflected in **Table 7**, as stated in Chapter 15 of Stoneham's Zoning Code. These rates are compared against local standards published by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and national standards used by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in its *Parking Generation, 5th Edition* report. The *Perfect Fit Parking Initiative, Phase II* report, published by MAPC in 2019, outlines overnight residential parking utilization collected at 200 multifamily residential developments in Greater Boston. Rates provided in this report represent a conservative estimate of parking demand as Stoneham is more outlying than any of the communities where data collection occurred.

The *Parking Generation, 5th Edition* report provides average demand based on parking demand studies submitted to ITE by an array of parties, including public agencies, developers, and consulting firms. These studies catalog the number of parked cars compared with the size of a given development, such as the number of living units or square footage. Most of these studies are captured at single-use, suburban locations; Stoneham's location within a major metropolitan

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area with quality multimodal access to Boston and other attractions indicates that ITE can be used as a conservative estimate of parking demand. The most recent report was published in 2019.

A third resource, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) *Shared Parking Manual, 3rd Edition* published parking demand guidelines for mixed-use projects. Data from this manual is queried for the shared parking demand model analysis at the end of this section.

Table 7 Parking Requirement Standards Comparison

Use	Parking Requirement	Average National Peak Demand (ITE)	Stoneham vs ITE	Average Local Peak Demand (MAPC)	Stoneham vs MAPC
Residential – Greater than two family	2.1 per dwelling unit ¹	1.21 per dwelling unit ² (Low-rise Multifamily Housing, General Urban/Suburban, LUC 220) 1.31 per dwelling unit ³ (Mid-rise Multifamily Housing, General Urban/Suburban, LUC 221)	Above	0.73 per dwelling unit (average across 189 sites in Greater Boston) 1.03 per dwelling unit (average across 20 sites in Melrose)	Above
Commercial/Business – Business, professional, administrative office	1 per every 350 square feet of gross floor area (2.86 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area)	2.39 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (General Office, ITE LUC 710)	Above	-	-

¹ Any spaces above 2.0 per dwelling unit should be clearly marked for visitor or guest parking

² Guest parking is reflected as part of these figures

³ Guest parking is reflected as part of these figures

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Use	Parking Requirement	Average National Peak Demand (ITE)	Stoneham vs ITE	Average Local Peak Demand (MAPC)	Stoneham vs MAPC
Commercial/Business – Medical/dental office	1 per every 200 square feet of gross floor area (5 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area)	3.23 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (Medical-Dental Office Building, ITE LUC 720)	Above	-	-
Commercial/Business – Retail/personal service establishment	1 per every 350 square feet of gross floor area (2.86 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area)	1.95 per 1,000 square feet of gross land area (Shopping Center, ITE LUC 820)	Above	-	-
Restaurants/diners	1 per 3 seats ⁴ (16.67 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area)	9.44 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (High-Turnover (Sit Down) Restaurant, ITE LUC 932)	Above	-	-

As **Table 7** shows, Stoneham's requirements today for minimum parking exceed national standards and observed demand at local residential development projects. These requirements apply across the community, although exemptions for developments in the Central Business District are discussed. Given the low utilization rates observed across the study area, the Town is well-positioned to lower its requirements and pursue alternative strategies to accommodating new parking demand associated with new development projects.

4.2 EXISTING ZONING

Stoneham's zoning code allows for exemptions for constructing required parking in its Central Business District, as well as for uses like banquet halls in its Commercial I District. The Central Business District zoning classification covers all properties abutting Main Street between

⁴ Assumes 1 seat is equivalent to 60 square feet of gross floor area

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Lindenwood Road and Hancock Street, as well as some abutting properties on side streets, encompassing most of the study area.

Exemptions currently allowed in the zoning code are dependent upon factors including, but not limited to:

- The capacity, location, and utilization of existing parking facilities
- Efficient and maximum use of parking needs and services provided
- Relief of traffic and parking congestion
- Provision of reasonable access by walking or shuttle arrangements

Special permits may be granted for the following conditions:

- Substitution of spaces within municipal parking lots within 1,600 of buildings
- Sharing of up to 50% of parking spaces with documentation of, among other factors:
 - Peak parking demand and principal operating hours for each use
 - A written agreement acceptable to the Planning Board
- Remote parking within 600 feet for customers or 1,200 feet for employees
- Up to 15% of the required parking may be reduced if, in the opinion of the Planning Board, the development proposal provides adequate pedestrian access to abutting commercial properties and improves pedestrian accessibility.

Change of uses do not require additional off-street parking provided the use does not intensify as a result of the change.

Although some reduction of required parking is allowed, the zoning code continues to obligate construction of parking in excess of local and national standards. Although required parking need not be on-site, the impacts elsewhere in Downtown Stoneham or across the community are felt.

4.3 SHARED PARKING DEMAND APPROACH

To understand the impact of future development in Downtown Stoneham, the study team performed a planning-level analysis using a combination of the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) *Shared Parking Model* and the *ITE Parking Generation*. The analysis:

- Creates a Stoneham specific parking demand ratio for each hour of the day based on existing land uses and observed parking demand
- Uses that ratio to estimate parking demand for additional development
- Provides some insights into the potential capacity available for additional downtown development



4.3.1 Land Use in Downtown Stoneham

Stoneham's downtown land uses reflect its character as a mixed-use center, including apartments, office uses, and a variety of retail. **Table 8** below provides a summary of estimated land uses in Downtown study area based on general categories.

Table 8 Estimated Land Uses in Downtown Study Area

Land Use	Estimated Size
Office	100,500 square feet
Retail	103,300 square feet
Restaurant	26,000 square feet
Industrial	72,500 square feet
Recreation	27,000 square feet
Institutional (church, museum, library)	74,000 square feet
Hospital	7,300 square feet
Apartments (four-family or higher)	212 units
Services (auto shops)	25,600 square feet
Banks	29,700 square feet

Note: Estimated Land Uses in Downtown Stoneham Study area, per MassGIS Assessing Data downloaded in 2021 with verification by Stantec and Town of Stoneham staff.

This study provided a planning-level review of today's parking demand, which provides insights into how future developments in downtown Stoneham will function as well as some insights into how much capacity there is to support additional development.

4.3.2 Model Methods and Results:

The Institute of Transportation Engineers publishes *Parking Generation*, widely considered the national standard for evaluating parking demand, although it is not perfectly applicable to downtown environments. The report collates data from parking studies nationwide completed by consultants, public agencies, and developers. Most of these studies consider single-use environments in more suburban contexts than Downtown Stoneham. However, ITE parking ratios provide a benchmark understanding of "real-life" parking demand by land use.

The Urban Land Institute publishes the *Shared Parking Manual*, which provides analysts with a standard methodology to estimate real demand over time in a mixed-use area like Downtown

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Stoneham. This type of analysis is meant to more realistically reflect demand patterns that vary by use throughout the day. For example, demand at an office is low in the middle of the night, at its peak in the middle of the day, and drops off in the early evening. Conversely, a restaurant may have little to no demand during the day and peak demand around the dinner hour.

Using the ULI methodology, Stantec modeled estimated demand in Downtown Stoneham, then compared it to the counts observed in the field. Field counts (shown in gray) show that the model is a decent fit for approximating parking demand downtown. **Figure 30** shows the results of the modeling exercise.

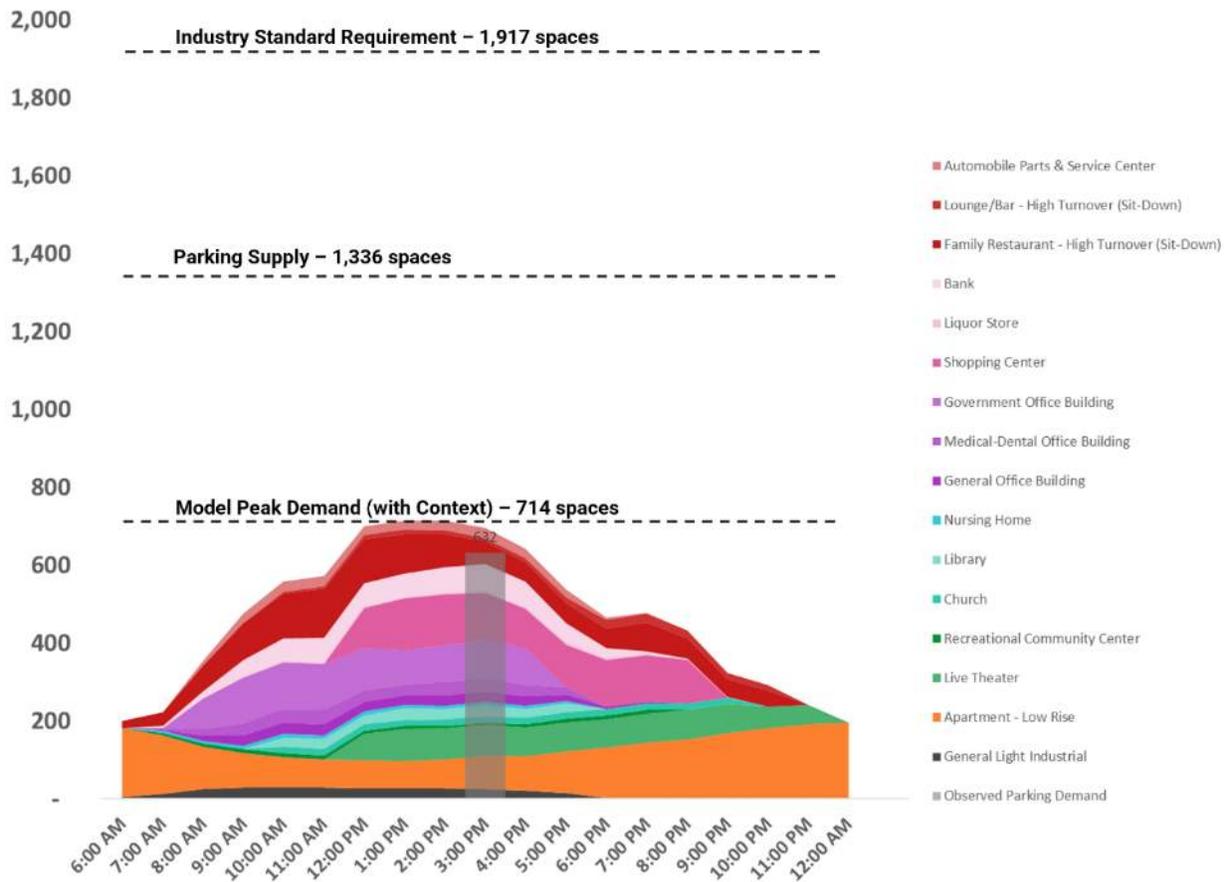


Figure 30 Existing Parking Demand in Downtown Stoneham, with observed utilization counts for comparison⁵

With this as a baseline, the study tested a development scenario where 40,000 square feet of retail and 10,000 square feet of restaurant uses were added to the existing inventory, a roughly 40% growth in the existing supply. These figures approximate potential growth in retail

⁵ This modeling exercise requires several assumptions, including vacancy rates and travel context factors that reduce modeled parking demand to account for Stoneham's multimodal environment.

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development cited in the 2014 Stoneham Town Center Market Study⁶. This study room for 50,000 square feet of retail growth, which Stantec assigned 20% to restaurants in line with the existing retail/restaurant breakdown for Downtown Stoneham. **Figure 31** shows the modeled results; a slight increase in peak demand, with ample room for additional development using existing parking.

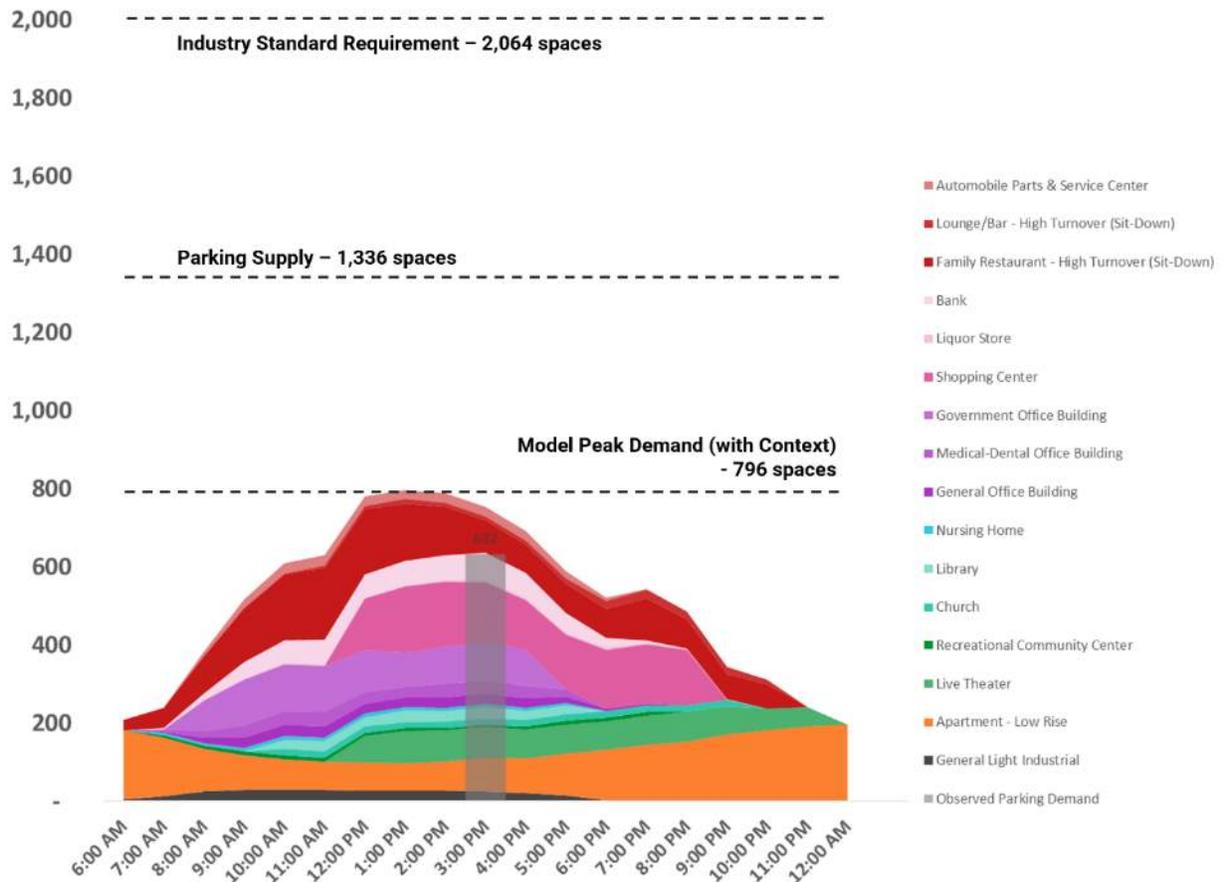


Figure 31 Parking demand based on an additional 40,000 square feet of retail and 10,000 square feet of restaurants in Downtown Stoneham

An additional development scenario involved the addition of 150 multi-family housing units to the study area, a roughly 70% growth in the existing supply. These figures approximate potential growth in residential development cited in the 2014 Stoneham Town Center Market Study. **Figure 32** shows the modeled results; a lesser increase in peak demand than the retail/restaurant scenario, with continued room for additional development using existing parking.

⁶ <https://www.stoneham-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/210/Stoneham-Market-Study-PDF>

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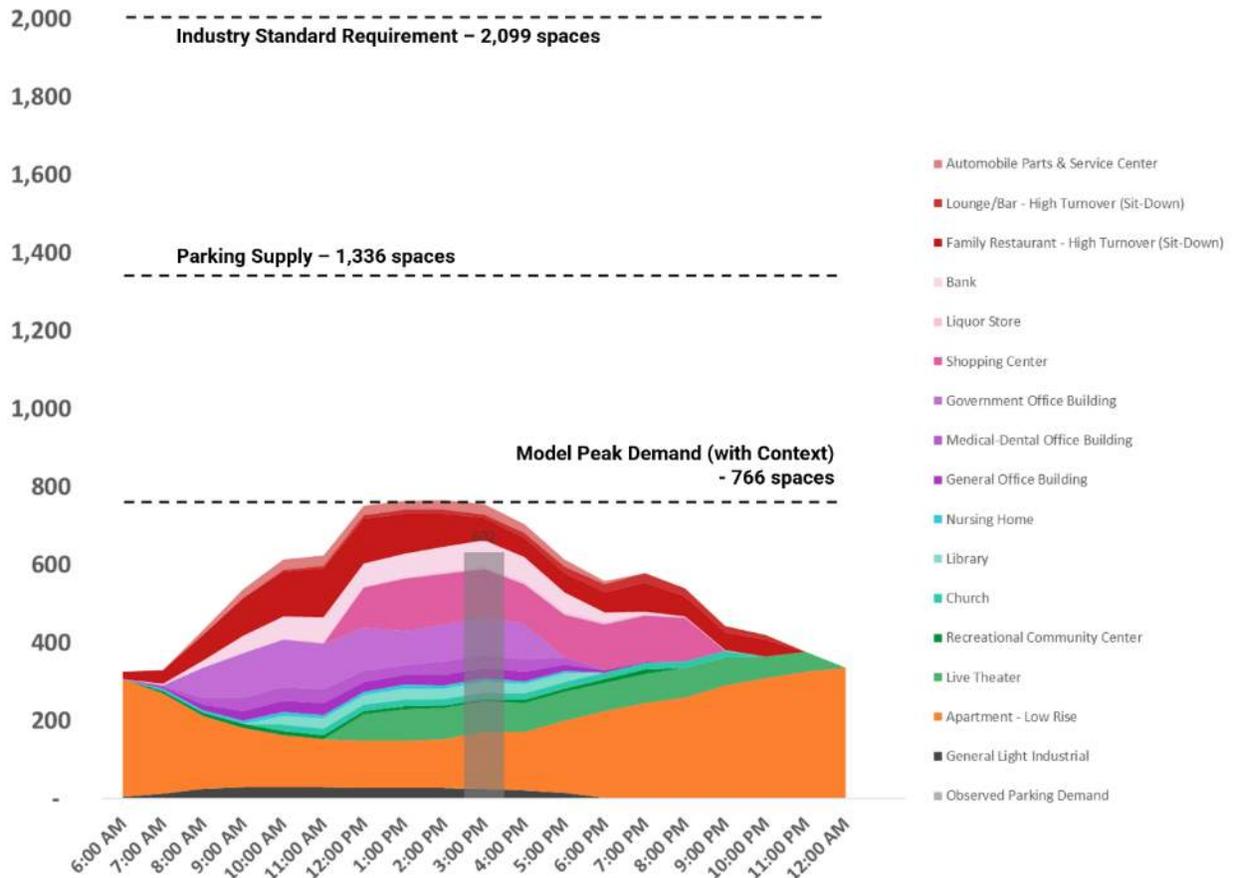


Figure 32 Parking demand based on an additional 150 housing units in Downtown Stoneham

It is important to note that this is a **sketch level analysis, meant to illustrate overall trends and development potential**. For example, this analysis assumes that all parking can serve all uses in the downtown, while under current conditions parking may be located outside an ideal walk, transit ride, or bicycle ride to a given destination. A more specific study may be necessary to determine parking needs for new developments.

However, this exercise illuminates several key findings, including:

- There is more than enough parking to support additional development, even if today it is not all open to the public. At peak, nearly 600 spaces are empty in Downtown Stoneham. This extra parking can be used for development constructed to be “downtown-friendly” in that it could be infill, adaptive reuse, or buildings build without their own parking to break up the active urban landscape.

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- Many land uses are complimentary from a parking perspective, most notably residential and office, or evening restaurant and a daytime use such as some educational uses, retail, or office. Development concentrated in these hours could take advantage of existing parking that is left empty, as shown in the “shoulders” of **Figure 31** and **Figure 32** above.

Office uses drive a considerable part of the parking demand in Stoneham (shown in purple on the figures above). Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programming that focuses on these users thus may have a relatively higher impact on driving down overall parking demand.

5.0 PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

5.1 TARGET OCCUPANCY

Outside of special events, parking use in a downtown area is highest when the mix of land uses are at their busiest. Particular hot spots may not necessarily be where the parking supply is at its most abundant; surpluses and shortages of parking can be localized in specific areas of the Downtown. Additional parking may be available within a reasonable walking distance, but usage of these additional areas can depend on whether lot owners allow for more general parking use and whether users are aware of this additional supply and willing to walk to their intended destination.

For this study, an 85% utilization threshold is encouraged to judge the success of on street and off-street parking assets. At this level, those desiring parking at a specific lot or along a particular block face are able to find it, while the parking is not so under-utilized so as to present an excess resource for the Town.

Where some areas exceed 85%, strategies such as wayfinding (to more readily available parking) or adjusting regulations can help manage demand. However, much of the Town at present is below this threshold, indicating that availability is not a common issue and that strategies to make parking more convenient can be pursued.

5.2 USER GROUPS

User groups expected to utilize the parking areas within Stoneham's Downtown fall into three general categories, based on general characteristics:

1. Downtown Residents

- a. Generally, have a high desire to park close to their dwelling unit
- b. Generally, consider having parking as an "assumed right", with an expectation that public on-street parking should be available for their own use
- c. Parking space turnover is categorized as minimal and unpredictable
- d. Parking duration can vary significantly
- e. May own more vehicles on an individual and/or per household basis than parking spaces assumed by bylaw, as no historical disincentive has existed.

2. Local Downtown Visitors / Shoppers

- a. Generally, have a high desire to park close to their destination
- b. Mixed willingness to pay for convenience
- c. Ability to modify travel mode is mixed
- d. Parking space turnover is regular and predictable



- e. Parking duration can vary significantly, and is generally under two hours

3. Employees / Workers / Business Owners

- a. Have a desire to park close to their employment location
- b. Generally, consider parking as a “necessity”
- c. Some indication of willingness to pay for permits for convenient unrestricted parking
- d. Ability to modify behaviors such as parking location is considered high
- e. Ability to modify modal shift is medium to high
- f. Occupation of parking areas will follow work shifts, with some continued occupation after work shift if linked trips occur
- g. Parking stall turnover is categorized as minimal and somewhat predictable

4. Town Visitors / Tourists

- a. Generally, have a moderate desire to park closer to their intended destination, but could be modified and likely to tolerate some reasonable walking distances
- b. Generally, consider parking as a “commodity”
- c. Have a moderate willingness to pay for parking if viewed as a reasonable rate and convenient and secure to their desired area
- d. Ability to modify modal shift is mixed and may be highly dependent on user group (income, age)
- e. Occupation of parking area will generally follow Downtown area activities, such as business hours, theater shows, or special events

Development of parking strategies requires an understanding of the Town's overall goals and striking a balance between the needs of the various user groups. Modifications that do not consider the needs of users or overly accommodate a specific user group may not achieve the desired outcome and may have a negative effect. It is important to note how the different user groups are connected. Residents and workers rely on the economic vitality of their community to sustain their lifestyle. Maintaining an attractive and safe environment with thriving businesses will draw more visitors to the area, furthering the economic vitality. As a Parking Management Plan is developed, it will be critical to consider how approaches will directly and indirectly impact user groups through this complex relationship.

5.3 PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Effective parking management incorporates several different strategies. It is important that the strategies a municipality selects result in outcomes that are consistent with community values, and vision. To that end, the following list of recommended strategies have been examined for applicability and feasibility in the Town of Stoneham. They fall into three separate categories – regulatory, policy, or infrastructure.

5.3.1 Regulatory

5.3.1.1 Parking Regulation

Regulations that favor higher-value uses such as service vehicles, deliveries, customers and differently abled persons should be supported. This may require re-designation from time to time of existing on-street or off-street parking spaces within the Downtown based on businesses' needs.

5.3.1.2 Time-Restricted Parking

Stoneham has different time restrictions for different on-street parking areas which may lead to confusion.

Creating a uniform, time restriction for on-street parking may reduce driver confusion, however, may incentivize long-term users such as employees to occupy parking stalls for longer periods in which they are not actively visiting downtown or spending money at businesses. Conversely, too short of a time-restriction can impact customers who desire a more leisurely visit to the downtown area which can elapse a full morning or afternoon. Too short of a restriction may result in a greater number of infractions, challenging for enforcement, further negatively impacting customer experience.

It should be noted that a uniform time-restricted parking strategy does not necessarily mean all parking spaces should be treated the same. Understanding the desired locations of the user groups, coupled with modifying some parking practices, can be used to develop an appropriate time-restricted strategy. However, a patchwork of different time regulations on the same block or adjacent blocks will confuse motorists.

A simple two-tier approach is recommended. Given the excess capacity during peak time periods in Downtown Stoneham, extending time limits up to at least four hours is advised on all streets where the average utilization is under 60%. This will provide the ability for visitors to conduct longer-term visits, potentially spending more money at local businesses, would better position retailers to attract more customers. Only on Main Street between Montvale and Maple would a consistent application of the current two-hour limit remain (removing the 30-minute spaces). These changes would be accompanied by wayfinding signing (see below) that includes a clear indication of where to find "long-term" parking when seeking to park on Main Street. While Winter Street shows high utilization, it is also recommended to be changed to 4-hour parking as a more appropriate location for long-term parking than Main Street.

Any change in the time regulation should be monitored to ensure utilization of spaces remains at an 85% level during peak time periods. As motorists should be able to find parking at any location, time regulations could be lowered to produce more turnover, or pricing of parking

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considered if block-faces or lots are consistently over-utilized. However, regulations should be clear and not over-applied in a way which leads to driver confusion.

5.3.1.3 Parking Sticker Program

Stoneham currently has a parking sticker program in place that permits, for a fee, to legally park in downtown municipal parking lots. Permits cost \$200 annually or \$60 quarterly and is open to residents, business owners, or persons employed in Stoneham.

Survey results indicated many respondents were unaware that parking stickers were an option in the community. An outreach campaign, a monthly \$20 option, or consideration for lowering prices may encourage more sticker purchases. It is possible that municipal lots could be made to be "permit parking only" during certain time periods and/or in certain spaces if enough passes are sold, which would ensure long-term parking is kept off street and help cover the cost of maintenance. Other strategies in this report would address dispersed demand from municipal lots in this instance.



Figure 33: Stoneham Parking Sticker

5.3.1.4 Paid Parking

The utilization results indicate that there is a significant amount of parking supply available during high demand times. Therefore, paid parking is not a recommended approach for Downtown Stoneham at this time.

Pricing typically works best as a justification for opening availability for off-street lots or on-street block faces. Should the Town in the future find that parking in ideal locations is consistently highly utilized, such as along Main Street and at locations within a short walk, pricing can help disperse

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this demand or encourage motorists to use different modes of travel or visit at different time periods.

5.3.1.5 Alternative Use of Parking Spaces

Parking and roadways represent the single largest use of public space in the Downtown. Therefore, the underutilization of this public space, such as underutilized parking, has an adverse impact to the vibrancy and attractiveness of the Downtown to local residents and visitors. By achieving the intended parking utilization goals, opportunities can be created to more efficiently use this valuable town asset to benefit the community, businesses and visitor experience.

The intent of the implementation of the measures outlined in this report is to efficiently manage vehicular traffic and parking within the Downtown to more manageable levels, while also encouraging multi-modal travel with supportive pedestrian and bicycle parking infrastructure within the area. The longer-term benefit of multi-modal travel programs to the Downtown may be shorter durations where parking occupancy meets or exceeds the comfortable 85% occupancy threshold and reduced average occupancy rates as an increasing number of Downtown patrons utilize alternative travel modes for their day-to-day needs.

As a result of these changes – and in part to encourage them, there may be opportunities and a need to remove some on-street vehicular parking areas to provide additional public realm spaces for the increased pedestrian and cyclist demands. This may include a variety of features, including streteries (like that already deployed at The Stones restaurant), other parklets, on-street bike racks/corrals, curb extensions at crosswalks, bike lanes and more.

5.3.2 Parking Policy

5.3.2.1 Land Use Policy

As illustrated in **Figure 20**, parking utilization rates along specific corridors vary significantly. Smart growth strategies that encourage more land uses and a greater diversity of land uses to lessen parking demand are encouraged. This can help fill in missing gaps of parking utilization (such as residential uses which use parking typically occupied during the day by office uses) and present a greater time span for the use of existing parking assets, so they do not sit vacant for hours or days at a time, such as on weekends.

Underutilized parking lots are positioned as a prime opportunity for redevelopment for this kind of strategy.

5.3.2.2 Shared Parking

Shared parking stands as a strategy to encourage a greater mix of uses in off-street lots and discourage the construction of parking with new development projects.

Oftentimes, shared parking is pursued between two landowners where one has excess parking during particular time periods and the other seeks parking, such as for employees, customers, or other types of visitors. Communities often require legal agreements, filed with the Town, which define roles and responsibilities of an agreement. Signage may also be posted which obligates particular spaces to certain user groups in satisfaction of a shared parking agreement.

This type of arrangement creates revenue opportunities for landowners and provides clarity for motorists regarding where and when they can park their vehicles. In some instances, a Town and a private party can enter into a shared parking agreement where a private lot is made open for public use (such as for daytime shopping), or a public lot is made open for private use (such as for overnight residential parking). Signage is critical to ensure would-be parkers are aware of the regulations in place.

Some communities have *shared parking districts* in place which effectively create a system of publicly-branded lots, although individual lots may continue to be privately-owned. This communicates one type of community branding to visitors; where pricing is involved, revenues may be shared among landowners. Stoneham is not well-positioned for this type of strategy at present due to its low utilization but may wish to pursue this in the long-term.

5.3.2.3 Wayfinding and Education

As noted in this study, adequate supply is available within the Downtown as a whole, even during time periods of peak demand on specific corridors and locations. However, where the perception or occasional reality of little parking supply is found, wayfinding and educational measures to encourage diversion of traffic to underutilized areas may better direct motorists to ideal parking locations. This helps reduce traffic congestion and driver frustration. This re-routing strategy may also encourage visitors and shoppers to explore other areas of the Downtown they may not otherwise experience.

This strategy leads to the ultimate goal of promoting parking availability and reducing the amount of time spent looking for parking. Stoneham can designate “long-term” parking and greater time-limits on all streets connecting with Main Street as recommended above, with complimentary wayfinding along Main Street to direct people to these areas of greater capacity.

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**Figure 34: Public Parking
Wayfinding Sign, Stoneham**



**Figure 35: Public Parking Wayfinding Sign,
Salem, MA**

5.3.2.4 Alternative Transportation

For a substantial portion of full-time residents, and overnight visitors, walking, cycling and taking local transit are efficient, convenient and comfortable options. Alternative transport reduces parking demand *and* reduces congestion while allowing for significant growth in the number of people accommodated in the same space. Ensuring that the infrastructure and amenities for those modes of travel are convenient, connected, and safe will increase the uptake of those options for daily trips.

5.3.2.5 Additional Pedestrian, Bicycle & Transit Infrastructure

To reduce vehicle trips (and therefore parking needs):

- Missing sidewalks
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Bicycle connections
- Additional seating (parklets, benches), waiting areas, bike parking (bike corrals)

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- Convenient and weather-protected transit shelters, real-time information, and frequent transit service

5.3.2.4 Delineated On-Street Parking Spaces

Stoneham currently delineates some on-street parking spaces, but this practice could be expanded and used throughout Stoneham. This practice optimizes the number of on-street parking spaces and discourages parking by RVs and larger vehicles that may limit the available parking supply. This strategy can further optimize the number of on-street parking spaces from current supply levels. In addition, dedicated parking spaces associated with ridesharing services should be considered if such services are planned for the Town.

6.0 PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

Using the findings from the stakeholder session, the public on-line survey, and the strategies identified in Section 5, several actions are recommended and summarized in **Table 9**. The costing is very high level and would be subject to identifying specific locations and design/construction costs associated with the infrastructure measures.

6.1 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

**Table 9
Recommended Parking Management Actions, Implementation Strategies, and High- Level Budget Requirements**

ACTION	CATEGORY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	COST (Capital)	COST /yr (Operating)
			\$ <\$25k \$\$ \$25k - \$50k \$\$\$ \$50k - \$100k \$\$\$\$ >\$100k	
Short Term (1-2 years)				
S-1 Wayfinding Signage & Education (for Drivers)	Regulatory	Strategically locate advance signage prior to, or along Main Street to direct drivers to off-street public lots and long-term on-street spaces. Use advertising and on-line	\$	\$



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		education to communicate the initiative.		
S-2 Wayfinding Signage & Education (for Pedestrians)	Regulatory	Strategically locate pedestrian scale signage that directs pedestrians from off-street public lots to major destinations. Use advertising and on-line education to communicate the initiative.	\$	\$
S-3 Improve Existing Pedestrian Crosswalks (see Figure 36)	Infrastructure	Ensure that existing pedestrian crossings have enhanced (ladder) pavement markings, smooth pavement, accessible ramps, and good sight lines).	\$ - \$\$\$	\$ - \$\$
			dependent on # locations & need for ramps	
S-4 Create bicycle-friendly route from Tri-Community Trail to Main Street from the west (see Figure 36)	Infrastructure	Design and implement a bicycle-friendly street (traffic calming, pavement markings, signage) along Wright Street and Hersam Street.	\$\$ - \$\$\$	\$ - \$\$
S-5 Delineate on-street parking spaces.	Infrastructure	Design and implement an on-street parking plan (white paint markings).	\$	\$
S-6 Improve Parking Sticker Information. Re-evaluate annual price.	Policy	Advertise and use on-line education to better communicate this existing initiative.	\$	\$
S-7 Identify Opportunities for Private/Public Parking Sharing	Policy	Identify high on-street utilization areas (>80%) and approach adjacent	\$	\$

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		businesses with excess off-street capacity		
S-8 Commission a Curbside Management Study Along Main Street	Study/Policy	Develop a separate curbside management strategy to provide guidance around the future use of the high value parking space along Main Street.	\$ - \$\$	n/a
S-9 Review Parking Duration Restrictions	Policy	Potential 2-Tier approach: >60% utilization: 2 Hour <60% utilization: 4 Hour Winter Street: 4 Hour	\$ - \$\$	\$
Short-Term Budgetary Need (high level estimate)			\$200k - \$400k	\$50k - \$100k
Medium Term (2-4 years)				
M-10 Redesign Intersections for Pedestrian Priority & Accessibility (See Figure 36)	Infrastructure	Ensure intersections have accessible ramps, enhanced pavement marking, curb extensions if necessary and leading pedestrian signals.	\$\$ - \$\$\$\$	\$
M-11 Relocate Crosswalks (See Figure 36)	Infrastructure	Remove and relocate 2 existing crosswalk locations as shown in Figure 6.1.	\$\$ - \$\$\$	\$
M-12 Upgrade Existing Sidewalks and Driveway Crossings	Infrastructure	Ensure that existing sidewalks have a smooth concrete surface and that driveways are redesigned to remove cross-slopes.	\$\$ - \$\$\$\$	\$

**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
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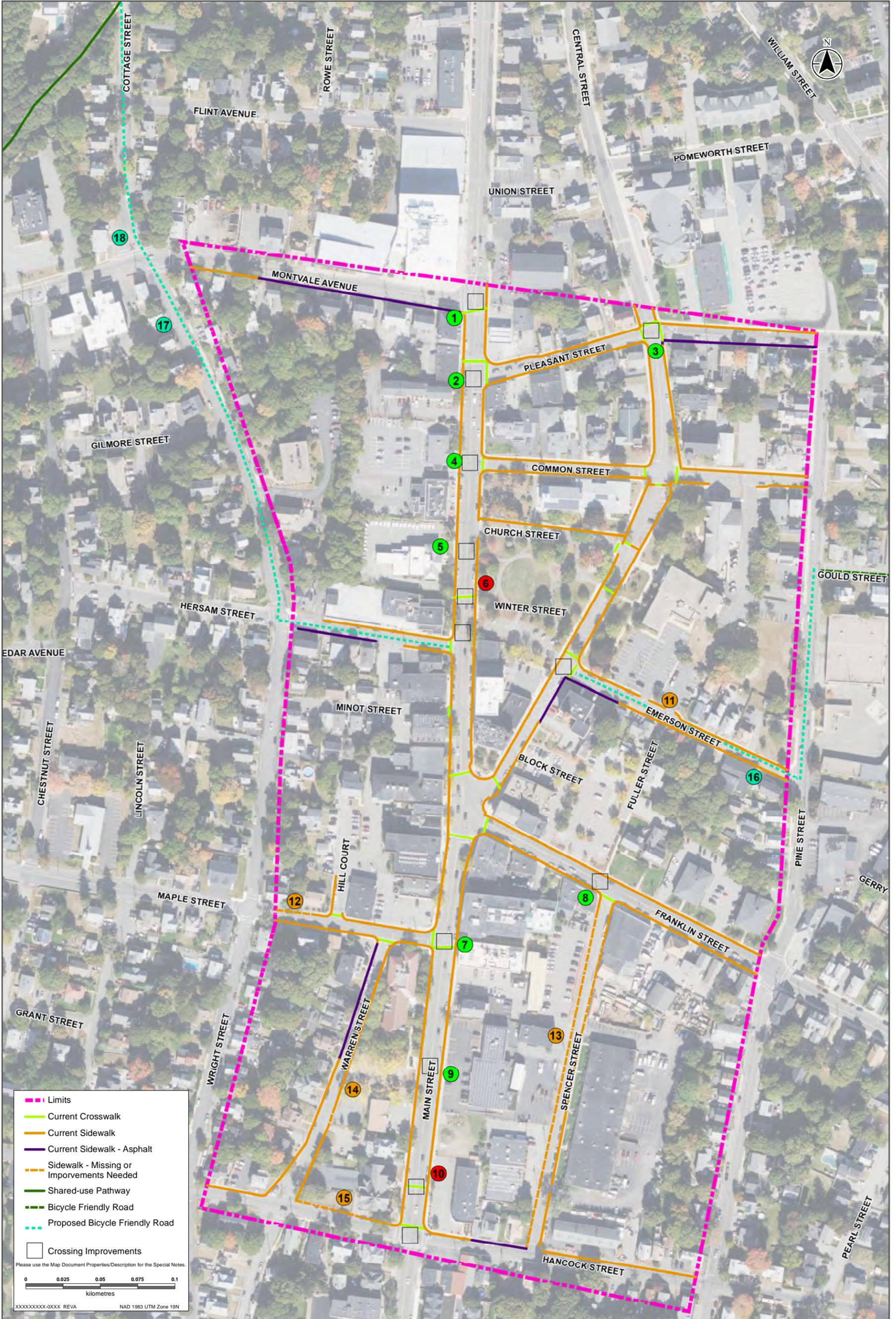
M-13 Install missing sidewalk links (See Figure 36)	Infrastructure	Construct missing sidewalk links in the pedestrian network. There should be sidewalks on both sides of all streets.	\$\$ - \$\$\$\$	\$
M-14 Install Bicycle Parking along and adjacent to Main Street	Infrastructure	Install short and long-term bicycle parking at locations where bike-friendly roads intersect Main Street.	\$\$	\$
M-15 Install Pedestrian Amenities (benches, shelters)	Infrastructure	Install additional pedestrian and transit amenities to allow people to comfortably wait.	\$\$ - \$\$\$	\$
M-16 Improve Pedestrian-scale Illumination	Infrastructure	Use existing street lighting infrastructure or install new pedestrian scale lighting.	\$\$\$ - \$\$\$\$	\$
Medium-Term Budgetary Need (high level estimate)			\$250k - \$850k	\$100k - \$200k
Long Term (>4 years)				
L-17 Commission a revised parking study to determine if the parking management system would benefit from parking pricing	Policy & Infrastructure	Evaluate the need for parking pricing and options for pricing technology to implement.	\$\$	n/a
L-18 Evaluate the need for e-charging stations and potential locations.	Infrastructure		\$	n/a
Long-Term Budgetary Need (high level estimate)			\$100k	n/a

6.2 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Several active transportation improvements have been recommended throughout the study area. These are shown in **Figure 36** and **Table 10**.

Table 10 Active Transportation Improvements

#	ACTION	SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM
1	Intersection improvements to prioritize pedestrians.	Short/Medium
2	Intersection improvements to prioritize pedestrians.	Short/Medium
3	Intersection improvements to prioritize pedestrians.	Short/Medium
4	Intersection improvements to prioritize pedestrians.	Short/Medium
5	New mid-block pedestrian crossing location.	Medium
6	Close existing midblock crossing and relocate to 5.	Medium
7	Intersection improvements to prioritize pedestrians.	Short/Medium
8	New Crosswalk at Fusion	Short
9	New mid-block pedestrian crossing location	Medium
10	Close existing midblock crossing and relocate to 9.	Medium
11	Sidewalk improvement	Medium
12	Sidewalk improvement	Medium
13	Sidewalk improvement	Medium
14	Sidewalk improvement	Medium
15	Sidewalk improvement	Medium
16	New on-street bike route	Short
17	New on-street bike route	Short
18	New on-street bike route	Short



Recommended Active Transportation Improvements

**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
PARKING STUDY - FINAL**

Appendix A: Stakeholder Session Presentation
December 31, 2021

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER SESSION PRESENTATION



Town of
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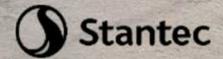
Stoneham Downtown Parking Study

Key Stakeholder Meeting

10:00-11:30am | June 14 | 2021



Town of
STONEHAM MA



AGENDA

1. Introductions	}	15 min	10:00-10:15am
2. Safety Moment			
3. Meeting Objectives			
4. Project Overview		15 min	10:15-10:30am
5. Working Session		45 min	10:25-11:15am
6. Key Take-Aways		10 min	11:15-11:25am
7. Next Steps		5 min	11:25-11:30am

INTRODUCTIONS

PROJECT TEAM



Erin Wortman
Director of Planning &
Community Development,
Town of Stoneham



Jason Schrieber, AICP
Principle-in-Charge
Stantec Consulting



Joe Olson, P. Eng.
Project Manager
Stantec Consulting



Michael Clark
Deputy Project Manager
Stantec Consulting

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Claudia Arnoff (Ceramica Paint Studio)
Monica Canova (Chamber of Commerce)
Megan Day (Chamber of Commerce)
Patricia Kilty (Chamber of Commerce)
Chris Senna (Chamber of Commerce)
Matt Grafton (Fire)
James McIntyre (Police)
Sharon Iovanni (Stoneham Bank)
Gus Niewenhaus (Planning Board)
Maria Sagarino (Town Clerk)

SAFETY MOMENT



SAFETY MOMENT

THE DUTCH REACH

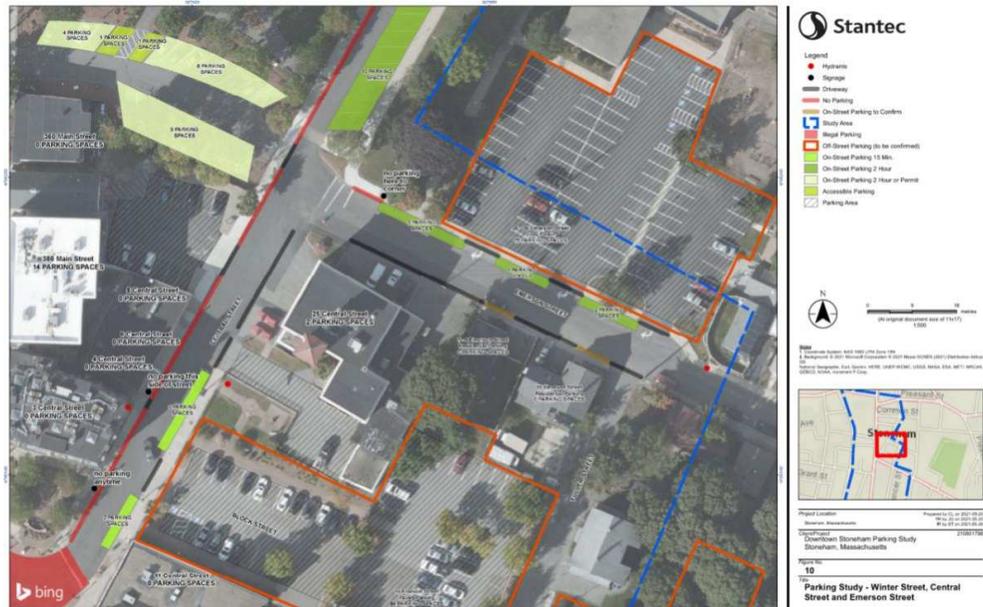


MEETING OBJECTIVES

1. Familiarize you with the project area
2. Share project work to date
3. Identify areas of concern
4. Identify opportunities
5. Use this information to inform the study
6. Answer any questions
7. Discuss next steps

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Parking Inventory

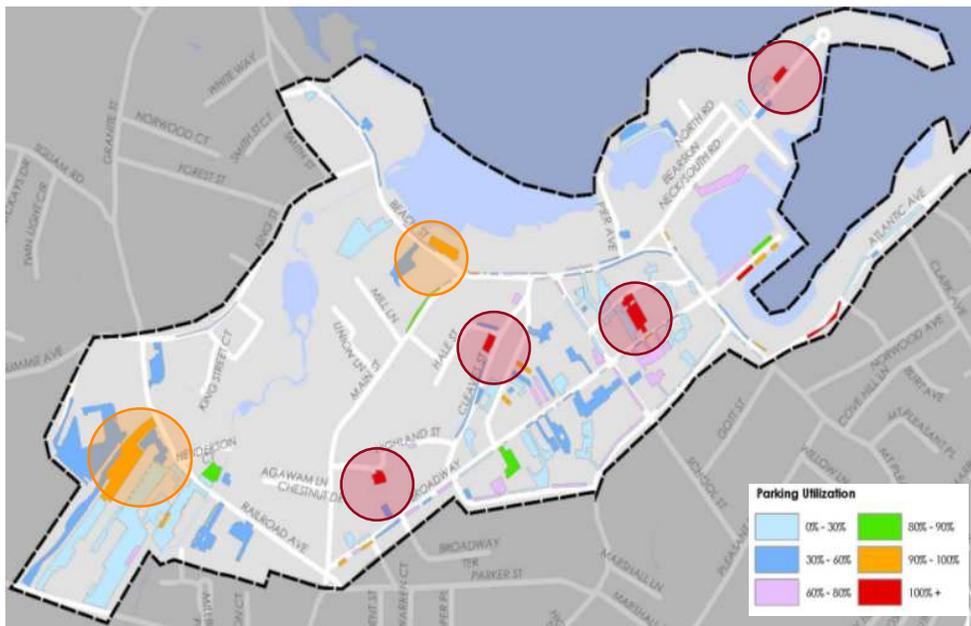


On-Street ~ 280 stalls

Off-Street ~ 550 stalls

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Utilization (Sample Project)



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Public Survey

<https://www.stoneham-ma.gov/>
(go down to news flash)

STONEHAM DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY (RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES, VISITORS)

Online Questionnaire

The Town of Stoneham is conducting a Downtown Parking Study focused on the blocks around Main Street between Montvale Avenue and Hancock Street. This study will review current parking issues and concerns, conduct an inventory and utilization analysis, review policies and practices related to parking, and propose recommendations to improve Downtown parking at present and into the future.

We want to understand more about your experience with parking in Downtown Stoneham. Please take a few minutes to help us identify what has been working and what can be improved.

Thank you for your feedback!

1. How often do you visit Downtown Stoneham? (Select one)

- Every day
- Multiple times per week
- A few times a month
- Once a month or less

2. How long is your average visit to Downtown Stoneham? (Select one)

- Under 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- 2-6 hours
- More than 6 hours and/or overnight
- I don't visit Downtown

3. Why do you visit Downtown Stoneham? (Select all that apply)

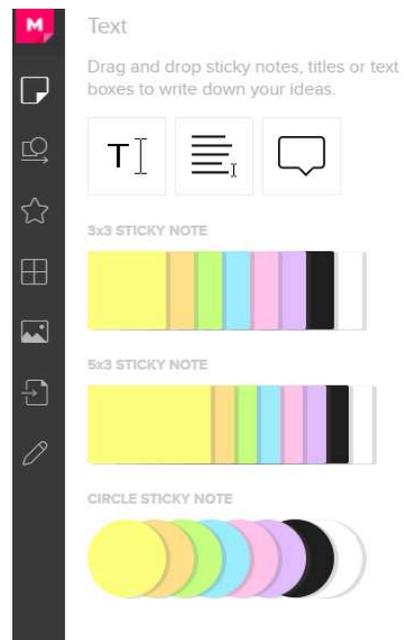
- I live Downtown
- I work Downtown
- I shop or go to restaurants Downtown
- I go to appointments and/or run errands Downtown
- I go to special events Downtown
- I don't visit Downtown

Other (please specify): _____

WORKING SESSION

About the MURAL Platform

- Collaborative whiteboard
- Real-time/web-based
- Use post-its, draw, paste photos
- User tools →



WORKING SESSION

Sample Project

MARDA LOOP ROLL PLAN FOR NOTATION, MARKUP, IDEAS, COMMENTS

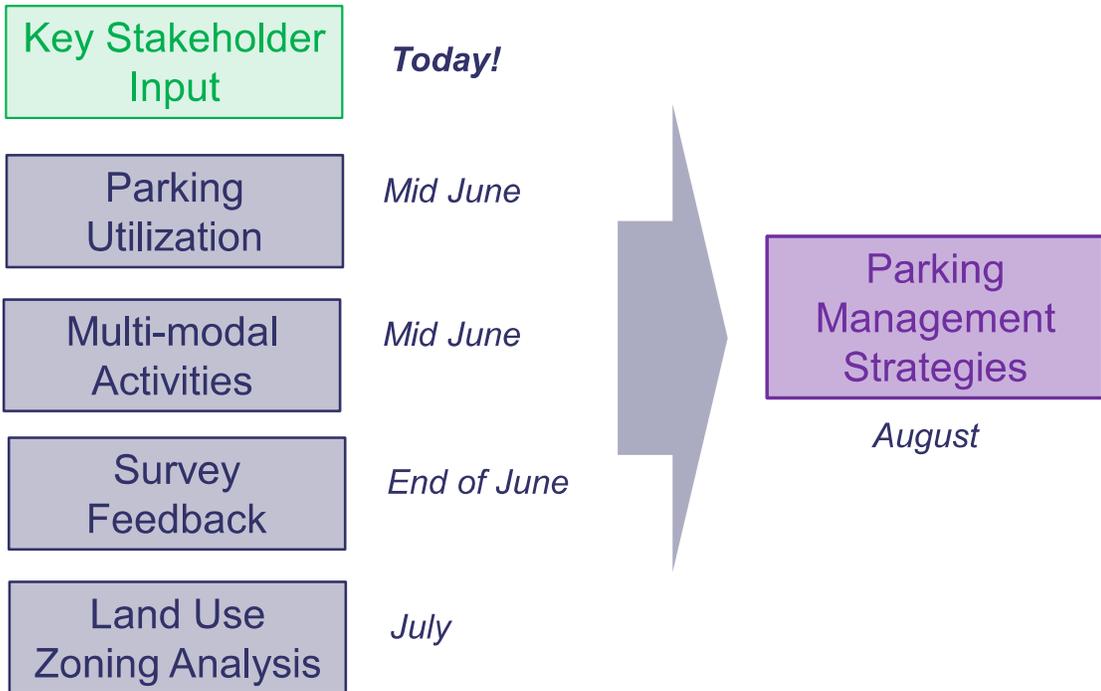
Below is link is for online model of Master Plan Designs:
<https://roundme.com/tour/353245-View/1106389/>
Animated Video of Master Plan on Youtube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UGe66h-1_o&feature=emb_logo

Key Design Elements from Master Plan
Areas for specific design review

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Locations with parking supply issues
- Locations with other parking issues
- Opportunities for better parking management
- Other...

NEXT STEPS



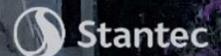
Thank you for your participation.



Erin Wortman
Director Planning & Community Development
Town of Stoneham
781.507.2445
Ewortman@stoneham-ma.gov



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**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
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Appendix B: Mural Board Comments
December 31, 2021

APPENDIX B: MURAL BOARD COMMENTS



Town of
STONEHAM | MA



Reduction of parking space requirements

Greater Boston stage coming back soon, adding demand

Difficulty of finding proximate parking for elderly is discouraging

Bike Parking should be added

FIRST APTIST CHURCH

WARREN STREET

HILL COURT

PUBLIC PARKING LOT

MINOT STREET

STONEHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY Intersection remains dangerous

Intersection could be better designed

No room for through traffic to get around SB left turns

MAIN STREET

GREATER BOSTON STAGE COMPANY

Thurs, Fri afternoon. & Sat. morning supply issues on Main

Some Illegal Parking

Should there be a crosswalk to avoid walking in front of fire station?

Can streets like Spencer provide more parking? (Spencer needs reconstruction to do so) This gets busy at night for Fuslon Taste. A walkway through block to Main would help.

Issues with Crossing

Loading blocks fire access. Should this be a loading zone?

SPENCER STR

PUBLIC

Some perceive people are using downtown as a park and ride for the 132 bus

2002 study said Stoneham was at 90% capacity

Sidewalk connectivity is not great

Connectivity Opportunity from Greenway to Downtown

There's parking available to north and south (MONTVALE, etc.). Could an in-town trolley shuttle people to the?

Investigate sharing Salem Five spaces (regularly underutilized)

POST OFFICE

Issues with crossing

Hard to cross street from Common to Post Office

Light should be upgraded and speak to Montvale light as well

people entering the wrong way (from Central Street)

STONEHAM TOWN COMMON

Events can add demand but there is parking. Better Information would help

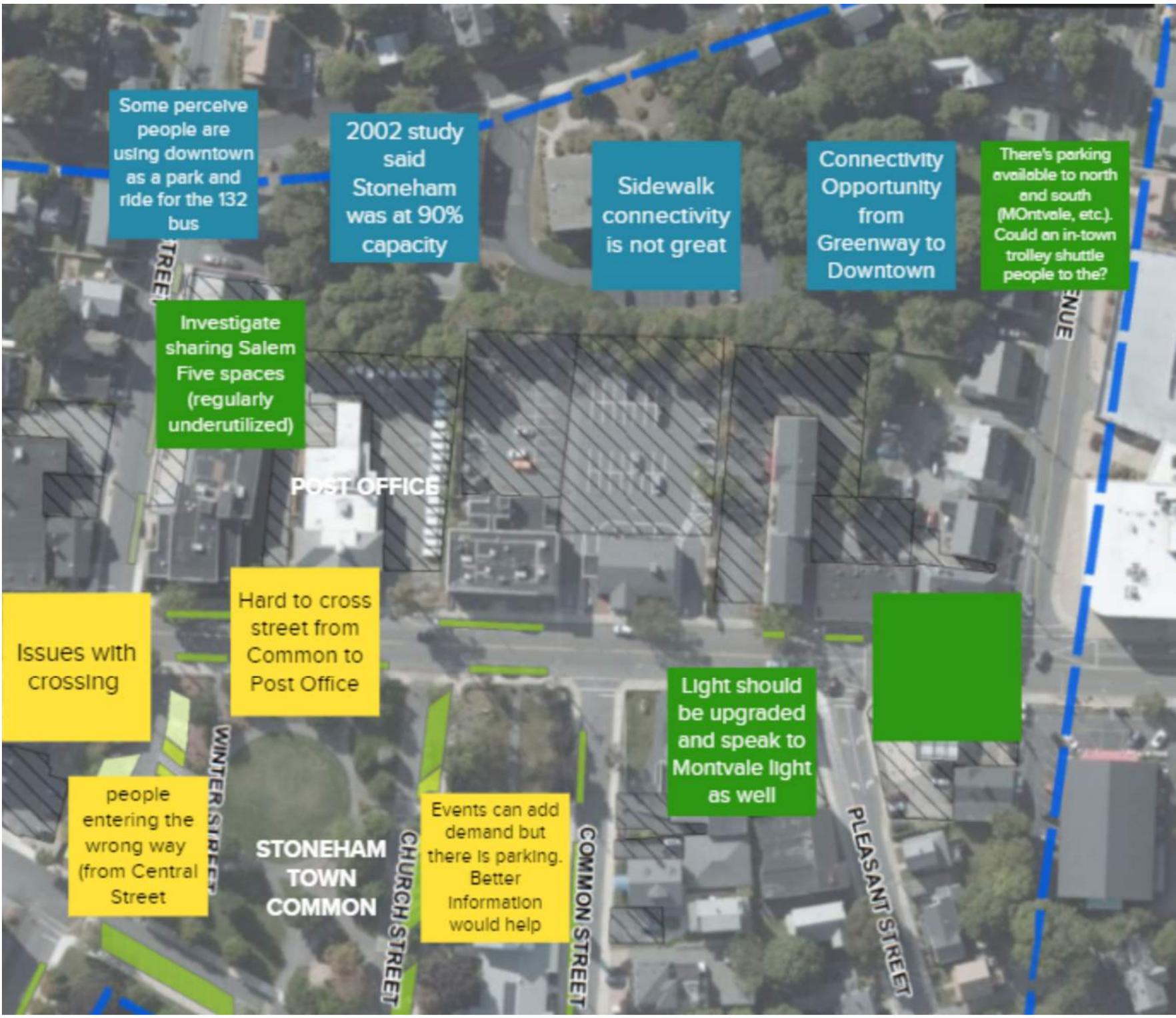
COMMON STREET

PLEASANT STREET

CHURCH STREET

WINTER STREET

AVENUE



APPENDIX C: ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

STONEHAM DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

Stoneham Downtown parking study (residents, employees, visitors)

Online Questionnaire

The Town of Stoneham is conducting a Downtown Parking Study focused on the blocks around Main Street between Montvale Avenue and Hancock Street. This study will review current parking issues and concerns, conduct an inventory and utilization analysis, review policies and practices related to parking, and propose recommendations to improve Downtown parking at present and into the future.

We want to understand more about your experience with parking in Downtown Stoneham. Please take a few minutes to help us identify what has been working and what can be improved.

Thank you for your feedback!

-
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. How often do you visit Downtown Stoneham?
(Select one) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Every day<input type="radio"/> Multiple times per week<input type="radio"/> A few times a month<input type="radio"/> Once a month or less |
| 2. How long is your average visit to Downtown Stoneham? (Select one) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Under 1 hour<input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 hours<input type="radio"/> 2 to 6 hours<input type="radio"/> More than 6 hours and/or overnight<input type="radio"/> I don't visit |
| 3. Why do you visit Downtown Stoneham?
(Select all that apply) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> I work in Downtown<input type="radio"/> I go to appointments and/or run errands Downtown<input type="radio"/> I go to special events Downtown<input type="radio"/> I live in Downtown<input type="radio"/> I shop or go to restaurants Downtown |
| 4. If you drive to Downtown Stoneham, where do you park most frequently?
(Select one) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> On-street<input type="radio"/> Off-street in a public lot<input type="radio"/> Off-street in a private lot<input type="radio"/> I don't drive when I visit Downtown |
-

**STONEHAM DOWNTOWN
PARKING STUDY - FINAL**

Appendix c: Online Survey Questions
December 31, 2021

Other (please specify):

5. Do you have any difficulty finding a space when you visit Downtown Stoneham? (Select one)

- Never, I find a space right away every time.
- Off-street in a public lot
- Off-street in a private lot
- I don't drive when I visit Downtown

6. If you selected that you often or always have difficulty finding a space when you visit Downtown Stoneham in question #5, what establishment(s) are you frequenting?

7. Other than parking supply, are there other factors that make parking challenging or undesirable? (Select all that apply)

- No nearby crosswalks
- Insufficient sidewalks
- Inadequate lighting
- Fear of vandalism
- Poor Handicap accommodation
- Other

Is there a specific location that is problematic?

8. Typically, how close to your destination do you park? (Select one)

- Right out front on site, or on the same block
- One or two blocks away
- Three or more blocks away
- I don't drive when I visit Downtown

9. If you drive to Downtown Stoneham, do you use a Town-issued parking placard? (Select one)

- Yes
- No

10. What else would you like to tell us about parking in Downtown Stoneham?

11. What is your zip code of residence?

12. Are you a resident of Stoneham?

- Yes
- No