Difficult Task

• How to discuss “lively” and “active” downtowns while discussing parking
  – Parking = “bring a vehicle to a halt and leave it”
Parking = Critical Asset

- Parking can be a business maker or breaker
- Too little or too much parking can have negative impacts
Parking Studies

• Help cities, towns, and neighborhoods get to the root of parking challenges.
  – Develop short term and long term goals
  – Different solutions for every community

• Recent Studies:
  – Quincy, Holliston, Foxborough, Marlborough, Cohasset, Scituate, Everett, Malden
Collect Data!

• Define issues to create solution
  – Capacity?
  – Utilization?
  – Peak hours?
  – Duration?
  – Busiest areas?
  – Regulations?
  – Loading?
  – Enforcement?
  – Current Pricing?
Occupancy vs. Capacity

The graph shows the comparison between on-street and off-street parking occupancy. The red line represents on-street parking, while the blue line represents off-street parking lots. The graph indicates that on-street parking occupancy is generally higher than off-street parking lots throughout the day. The occupancy remains above 85% throughout the day, as indicated by the dashed red line.
Management is Crucial

• Need turnover for successful business district

• Park once and visit multiple destinations
  – Less circling for parking, more foot traffic
Regulations

• Make decisions with the whole business district in mind
  – Create a cohesive parking area
Signage
Signage
Shared Parking

• Utilize parking spaces for more than one use
  – Ex: use a bank parking lot in the evening for restaurant parking
Zoning

- Many communities require more parking than is needed
  - Discourages development
  - Parking lots instead of green space or development

- Evaluate/update your zoning bylaws
Walking/biking

• Create an environment where people feel safe walking and biking instead of driving

• Determine what the barriers are
  – Large intersection unsafe to cross on foot?
  – No bike lanes or places to lock bikes?
Placemaking

• Parking is one of the largest areas of municipal land – use it to your advantage. Utilize it!
• Parklets
• Close down roads to traffic and parking
Costs

• Parking is expensive to build/maintain!
  – Construction & Maintenance – land, paving, striping, signage, lighting, structure upkeep, snow removal
  – Enforcement – Parking Clerk, meter maid/police time, ticket books, appeals, online ticket payment system, credit card fees, collection agencies
  – Issuing Permits – residential, employee, recreational

• Are you passing along the costs?
Demand Pricing

• Smart Parking Meters
• Fluctuate parking rates
  - High Demand = High Cost
  - Low Demand = Low Cost
• Pricing tiers
  - Costs lower or free further away from center
• Parking Benefit Legislation
  - Clear authorization of pricing controls and how to use revenue
Use Parking Revenue to Benefit Business District
“We don’t have enough parking”

“We must build more parking”
“Let’s better manage our current parking supply”

“We don’t have enough parking”

“We must build more parking”
Keys to Success

- Design downtown for all users
- Provide appropriate supply
- Make decisions based on DATA
- Manage the Parking!
  - Turnover
  - Regulations
  - Signage
  - Shared Parking
  - Pricing
  - Zoning
- Don’t build new parking if you are unable to light it, sign it, and maintain it
- Educate business owners
  - Turnover is key to success
  - Pricing may actually help businesses
- Encourage walking/biking
- Placemaking

Different techniques work for different communities!
Thank you!

Sarah Lee
Senior Transportation Engineer & Planner
slee@mapc.org