Wollaston Center Parking Analysis

Funding provided by the City of Quincy and the Unified Planning Work Program

August, 2014



Prepared for City of Quincy 1305 Hancock Street Quincy, MA 02169

www.quincyma.gov

Thomas P. Koch, Mayor



Prepared by Metropolitan Area Planning Council 60 Temple Place, 6th Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02111 www.mapc.org

Acknowledgements

This parking study was developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in partnership with the City of Quincy. MAPC is Greater Boston's regional planning agency whose mission is to promote smart growth and regional collaboration.

This document was produced with input from the Mayor of the City of Quincy, along with Planning Department and City staff and local business owners. MAPC would like to particularly thank Mayor Thomas P. Koch; Dennis Harrington, Planning Director; Kristina Johnson, Director of Transportation Planning; Dean Rizzo, President of the Quincy Chamber of Commerce; and the Wollaston Business Association for their guidance, input, and support throughout this process.

Professional technical assistance provided by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council was led by Sarah Kurpiel Lee, Transportation Engineer and Planner; and Eric Halvorsen, Assistant Director of Transportation.

The City of Quincy and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) program jointly funded this study. MAPC wishes to express our thanks to the Governor and the members of the Legislature for their continued support and funding of the UPWP program.

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Officers

Lynn Duncan, President Keith Bergman, Vice President Taber Keally, Treasurer Shirronda Almeida, Secretary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Study Area	7
Existing Parking Analysis	9
Parking Capacity and Regulations	9
On-Street Parking Occupancy	12
Parking Duration	16
Parking Turnover	17
Private Parking Lot Observations	18
MBTA Wollaston Parking Lot	18
CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits Parking	18
CVS Rear Lot	18
Supreme Liquors Lot	19
Employee Parking	19
Observed Parking Violations	20
Wollaston Business Association	21
Parking Observations and Recommendations	22
Summary and Next Steps	29

Executive Summary

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), a regional planning agency serving the 101 cities and towns of Metro Boston, collaborated with the City of Quincy to complete a parking study for Wollaston Center. In 2013, MAPC and the City of Quincy completed a comprehensive planning study for the area around the MBTA's Wollaston Red Line Station ("Re-Envisioning Wollaston: A Station Area Plan for Wollaston Center"1) that outlined the future potential for transit oriented development in Wollaston Center and identified parking as a concern of local business owners and residents. Within the report's recommendations, a parking study was identified as a short-term action item. Therefore, at the request of the City, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) conducted a parking study in Wollaston Center with the intent of creating an inventory of existing on- and off-street parking, and providing recommendations for maximizing efficiency through improvements and new or updated parking policies. As part of the study, MAPC analyzed existing parking capacity, occupancy, and turnover data, and met with local business owners to identify issues and receive feedback on the parking recommendations.

Study area observations were completed during the Fall of 2013. Overall, the parking analysis showed there is adequate on-street parking in Wollaston Center during the weekday and Saturday peak hours. Although the core of the business area along Hancock, Beale, and Beach Streets experiences a high level of parking demand, there are generally parking spaces available toward the periphery of the study area, within a short walk of many desired destinations.

MAPC's field observations revealed:

- Average occupancy of the available parking spaces was 50% during the weekday observation and 60% during the Saturday observation, well below the target occupancy level of 85%²
- Peak hour occupancy was 58% during the weekday observation (12pm), and 68% during the Saturday observation (11am). An additional weekday peak occupancy of 61% was observed at 6pm, presumably when people were stopping in Wollaston Center on their way home from work
- Within the study area, Hancock, Beale, and Beach Streets experienced the highest parking demand

In this report, MAPC has outlined several recommendations that can improve parking availability in Wollaston Center. Small changes to existing parking policies, as well as some improvements, will help foster economic growth while not overwhelming the landscape with additional surface parking lots. These changes will also help the existing businesses in Wollaston Center and the residents, employees and patrons who frequent this area.

Recommendations include:

- Implementing a consistent 2 Hour regulation "2 Hour Parking 8am-6pm, except Sundays and Holidays" for all, or the vast majority, of the Wollaston Center parking spaces
- > Purchase new parking signage
- Designate employee parking areas so on-street spaces can be utilized by business patrons
- Designate and publicize a process for changes to local parking regulations

-

¹ Published in September, 2013.

 $http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/2013-09-06_Final\%20Report_web_0.pdf$

² The High Cost of Free Parking, by Professor Donald Shoup.

Review the residential parking permit program. Consider a neighborhood-based permit program. Consider providing employee parking on residential streets.

Given the availability of parking, it does not seem appropriate at this time to build any new parking spaces in Wollaston Center for the existing uses, although if there were to be any new large-scale developments or redevelopments (like the return of the Wollaston Theater or a new mixed use development), there may be a need for some additional parking resources. This report is intended to serve as a baseline of parking data for the City to use to as it moves forward with the revitalization of Wollaston Center.

Introduction

The Wollaston neighborhood of Quincy is a heavily residential area with a core business district that includes a mix of retail and office uses with direct access to the MBTA's Red Line. During the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) study of Wollaston Center in 2013, residents and business owners identified parking as an issue and a parking study was requested. The purpose of this parking study is to determine how existing downtown parking spaces are currently being utilized, how often, and for what duration. This effort will help determine if the existing parking supply is appropriate, whether regulations and/or the location of parking should be adjusted, and determine whether there is capacity for any future development.

In general, all public parking should be as easy as possible for local business patrons to locate, access, and utilize. To that end, MAPC identified a few basic priorities for Wollaston Center, some of which have already been accomplished by the City of Quincy:

- Parking should be affordable
- Parking should be available at all times
- Parking regulations should be consistent
- Parking regulations should be clear and concise
- Parking signage and regulations should be visible
- Parking should encourage people to park once and visit multiple destinations in one trip
- > Short-term parking should be prioritized in front of businesses, with long-term parking at the periphery of the business district
- > Parking policies should aim for 85% parking occupancy³, meaning parking is generally close to being fully utilized at all times but there are always spaces available

MAPC collected and studied existing parking capacity, occupancy, and turnover data in the Wollaston Center study area as outlined by the City of Quincy. This parking study is intended to be a companion piece to the in-depth recommendations for future zoning and parking ratios for new development which can be found in MAPC's Re-Envisioning Wollaston: A Station Area Plan for Wollaston Center.

The scope for this parking study included identification of the following:

- 1. All on-street parking occupancy and capacity within the study area
- 2. Existing parking regulations within the study area
- 3. Hourly occupancy and turnover on both a weekday and a Saturday
- 4. Peak parking areas

- 5. Existing employee parking areas
- 6. Current enforcement levels and the effectiveness of the enforcement
- 7. Private parking lot utilization at specific areas, including the Wollaston MBTA parking lot, and the CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits parking lot

Throughout this process, MAPC held meetings with the Wollaston Business Association and with staff from the City of Quincy (including Mayor Koch) to determine existing issues and potential solutions.

³ Target parking occupancy level identified in The High Cost of Free Parking, by Professor Donald Shoup. An 85% parking occupancy is generally considered the sign of a "healthy" parking district - one with strong demand but 1 or 2 parking spaces available on every block.

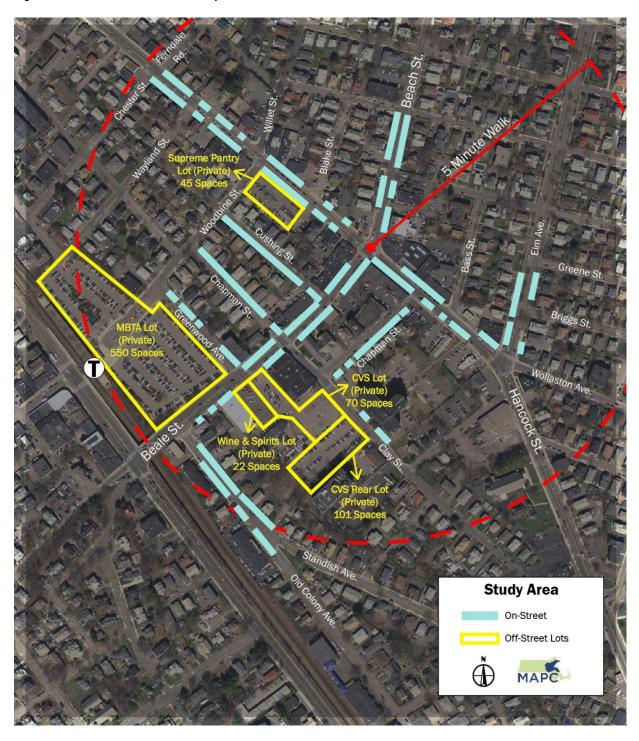
Study Area

Wollaston Center is walkable and compact, and centers around Hancock Street, Beale Street, and the Wollaston MBTA Red Line station. The study area is generally one-quarter of a mile in distance, or approximately a five minute walk from end to end (as shown in **Figure 1**). The study area includes the following public on-street parking areas in Wollaston Center:

- Hancock Street, between Ferndale Road and Elm Avenue
- Beale Street, between Old Colony Avenue and Hancock Street
- Beach Street, between Hancock Street and Marlboro Street
- Elm Avenue, between Hancock Street and Greene Street
- Cushing Street, between Woodbine Street and Beale Street
- Chapman Street, between Woodbine Street and Chapman Street
- Clay Street, between Chapman Street and Wentworth Road
- Greenwood Avenue, between Woodbine Street and Beale Street
- Old Colony Avenue, between Beale Street and Pitts Avenue
- Chapman Street, between Clay Street and Hancock Street
- Wentworth Road, between Clay Street and Hancock Street

In addition, a number of private lots, including the Wollaston MBTA parking lot and the CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits parking lot were observed to determine general occupancy levels.

Figure 1 Wollaston Center Study Area



Existing Parking Analysis

In order to determine the existing parking conditions within Wollaston Center, MAPC conducted a parking study on Tuesday, October 22 from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, November 16, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Prior to the data collection effort, the number, type, and location of all study area parking spaces were documented.

Parking Capacity and Regulations

There are a total of 258 on-street public parking spaces within the study area. The on-street spaces include a wide variety of parking regulations, including 2 hour, 1 hour, 15 minute, handicap parking, and unrestricted/unsigned parking. The majority of spaces in the study area are 2 Hour and 1 Hour regulations, but they vary slightly – with some having different restrictions on Sundays and/or Friday nights. There does not seem to be any consistency in the location of the parking regulations, and some street blocks have three or four different parking regulations on them. The variety of existing parking regulations can result in driver confusion and/or drivers ignoring the regulations completely.

A summary of the on-street parking regulations is shown in **Table 1** and illustrated in **Figure 2**. A detailed breakdown of parking capacity and regulations by block is included in **Appendix A**.

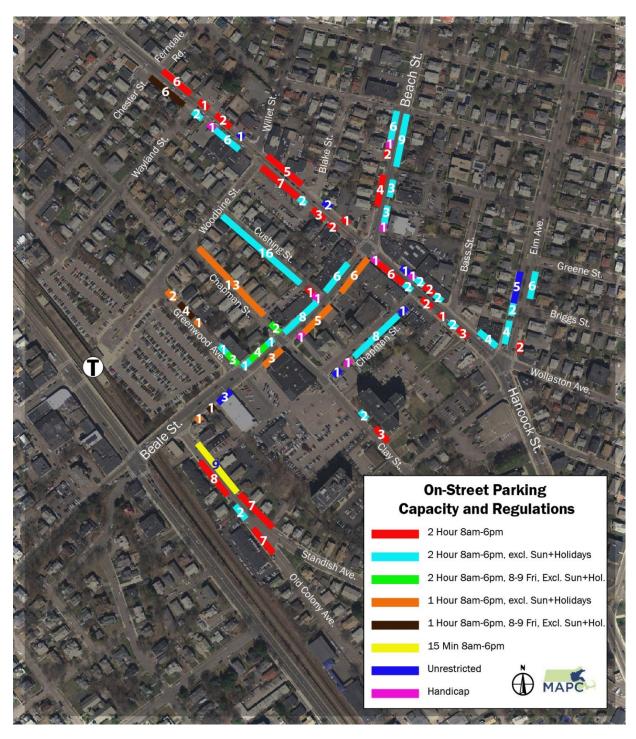
Table 1. On-Street Parking Regulations

Type of Parking Regulations	Capacity	Percent
2 Hour ¹	184	71%
1 Hour ²	42	16%
Unrestricted/Unsigned	14	5%
15 Minute	9	4%
Handicap	8	3%
Loading	1	1%
Total	258	100%

¹Includes "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm)", "2 hour parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

²Includes "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

Figure 2 On-Street Parking Space Capacity and Regulations



In addition to the on-street (public) spaces within the study area, a number of private parking lots were observed during the parking study, including the MBTA parking lot, the CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits lot, the CVS Rear lot, and the Supreme Liquors lot.

The total parking capacity in the study area is 1,046 spaces, where 25% are public and 75% are private spaces. All study area parking spaces are summarized in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Study Area Parking Capacity

Type of Parking	# of Spaces	Percent
On-Street (Public)	258	25%
MBTA Lot (Private)	550	52%
Wollaston Wine and Spirits (Private)	22	2%
CVS Lot (Private)	70	7%
CVS Rear Lot (Private)	101	10%
Supreme Liquors Lot (Private)	45	4%
Total	1046	100%

On-Street Parking Occupancy

During the parking observation hours, MAPC tracked parking occupancy, duration and parking space turnover by time of day in order gain an in-depth understanding of how parking is utilized in Wollaston. This parking data helps to identify peak demand times, average parking durations, and areas with the highest parking demand. A summary of the on-street occupancy is shown below in **Table 3**. The occupancies by time of day are also shown in chart form in **Figure 3**.

Peak parking occupancy for the on-street spaces in Wollaston Center occurred during two points throughout the observation period. The first peak occurred at 12:00 p.m., likely the result of people coming to Wollaston during their lunch hour to do business and buy lunch. The second peak hour occurred at 6:00 p.m., likely the result of people stopping at the businesses in Wollaston Center on their way home from work. This likely includes people stopping at the various restaurants in the area to have dinner.

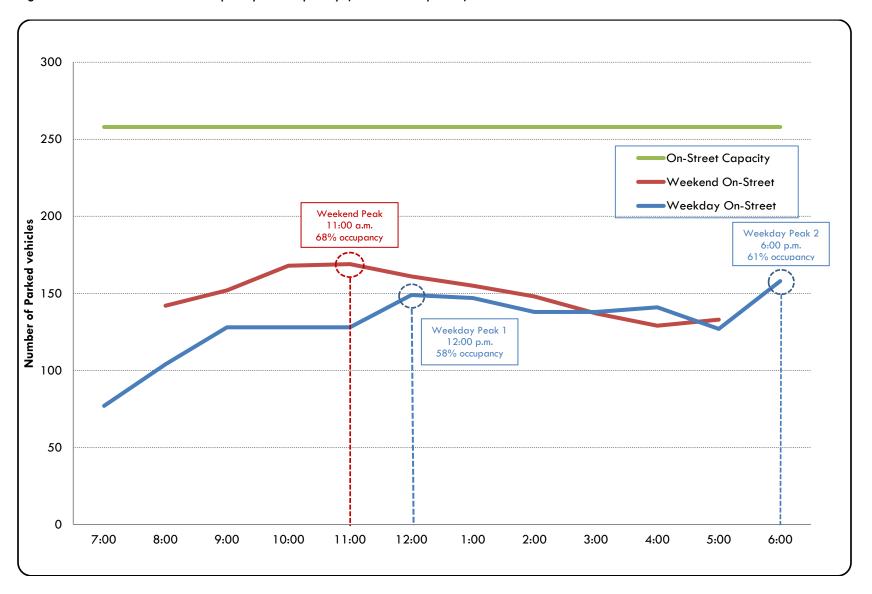
The peak occupancy on Saturday occurred at 11:00 a.m., although parking was generally busy between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The data indicates that the weekend peak occupancies were generally higher than weekday peak occupancies. This is due to a number of factors, including visitors and patrons frequenting the many businesses in Wollaston Center, residents parking on the street in front of their homes, and a popular church function occurring on the observation date. Even in spite of all these events occurring in Wollaston Center on the observation day, parking capacity still only peaked at 68% which is well below the 85% target occupancy threshold.

Table 3. Percent of Occupied Spaces by Time of Day

	Weekday	Saturday
	On-Street	On-Street
Time of Day	(258 Spaces)	(258 Spaces)
7:00 a.m.	30%	-
8:00 a.m.	40%	56%
9:00 a.m.	50%	61%
10:00 a.m.	50%	67%
11:00 a.m.	50%	68%
12:00 p.m.	58%	66%
1:00 p.m.	57%	62%
2:00 p.m.	53%	59%
3:00 p.m.	53%	54%
4:00 p.m.	55%	51%
5:00 p.m.	49%	52%
6:00 p.m.	61%	-
Average Occupancy	50%	60%

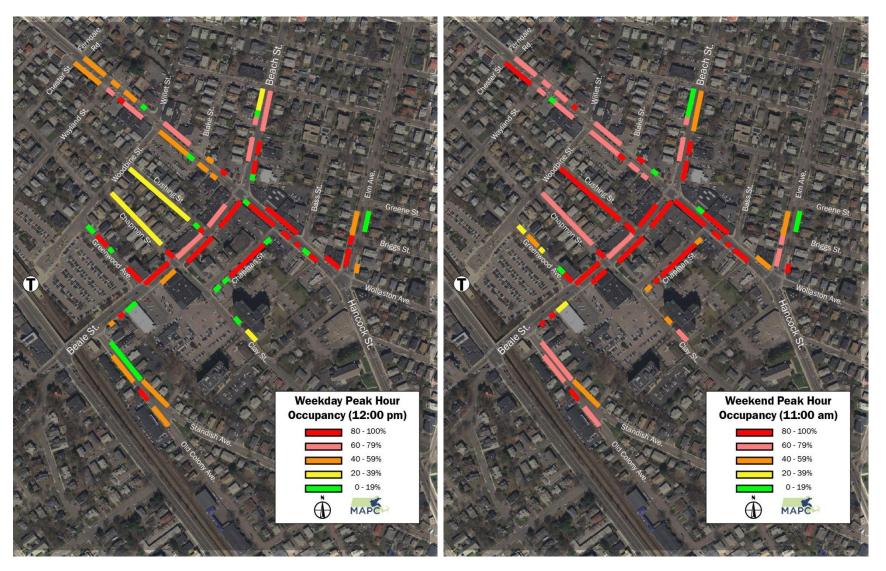
Parking analysis performed on Tuesday October 22, 2013 (weekday data) and Saturday November 16, 2013 (weekend data). Shading indicates the peak times during the day.

Figure 3 Wollaston Center Occupancy vs. Capacity (On-Street Spaces)



Parking occupancies were highly varied throughout Wollaston Center with pockets of busy areas surrounding popular local businesses. Hancock, Beale, and Beach Streets (with a total of 146 public parking spaces) were observed to have a slightly higher peak occupancy level than the rest of the onstreet spaces in the study area, with an average occupancy of 53% during the weekday observation and 65% during the Saturday observation. **Figure 4** illustrates on-street parking utilization across Wollaston Center during the peak hour on both the weekday and weekend observation days. Dark red indicates areas of on-street parking that were above 80% during the busiest hour of the observation day. A detailed breakdown of parking occupancies by block is included in **Appendix B**.

Figure 4 Weekday and Saturday Peak On-Street Occupancy by Location



Parking Duration

When conducting a parking study, it is important to collect data on parking duration. The turnover of parking spaces is critical to the success of a business district because patrons of the area businesses want to find a parking space within a short walk of their destination. If vehicles are parking in on-street spaces and exceeding the time indicated by the parking regulations, parking spaces may not be available for other patrons. Duration studies can also indicate when employees park in on-street spaces in front of their businesses for long periods of time and utilize spaces that should be reserved for patrons.

During MAPC's observations, the overall average parking duration for on-street spaces was 1.4 hours (84 minutes) during the weekday and 1.2 hours (72 minutes) on Saturday. In general, most vehicles parked in 2 Hour parking spaces abided by the parking regulations. However, many vehicles in the short-term spaces were observed parking longer than the posted time regulation. Vehicles parked in 1 Hour spaces were observed to have an average duration of 1.3 hours on the weekday. Vehicles parked in the 15 Minute spaces on Old Colony Avenue exceeded the posted time limit significantly, with an average duration of 1 hour during the weekday observation and 2.1 hours during the Saturday observations. Vehicles parked in unrestricted/unsigned spaces were observed to have longer durations, averaging 1.5 hours. Loading and handicap parking had relatively short parking durations, averaging less than one hour during both the weekday and Saturday observations. Average duration data organized by parking regulation is shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Average Parking Duration by Type of Parking

Type of Parking	Weekday (hours)	Saturday (hours)
2 Hour	1.5	1.5
1 Hour	1.3	0.9
Unrestricted/Unsigned	1.5	1.5
15 Minute	1.0	2.1
Handicap	0.7	0.7
Loading	0.5	0.9
Overall Duration	1.4	1.2

Parking analysis performed on Tuesday, October 22 and Saturday November 16, 2013. Red denotes average parking durations that exceed the posted regulations.

During the weekday observations, approximately 82% of vehicles in 2 Hour spaces were observed to have parked for less than two hours, and 76% of vehicles in 1 Hour spaces were observed to have parked for less than one hour. During the Saturday observations, approximately 83% of vehicles in 2 Hour spaces were observed to have a duration of less than two hours, and 85% of vehicles in 1 Hour spaces were observed to have a duration of less than one hour. In general, vehicles parked in unrestricted/unsigned parking spaces had similar durations to vehicles in 2 hour parking spaces. Vehicles parked in 15 Minute, Handicap, and Loading Spaces had higher rates of short-term parking than the others. Duration by type of parking is shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Percent of Vehicles Parked by Duration and Type of Parking

Torre of Double o	Weekday			Saturday			
Type of Parking	<1 hour	1-2 hours	2+ hours	<1 hour	1-2 hours	2+ hours	
2 Hour	63%	19%	18%	63%	20%	17%	
1 Hour	76%	12%	12%	85%	8%	7%	
Unrestricted/Unsigned	67%	17%	16%	63%	15%	22%	
15 Minute	79%	4%	17%	61%	0%	39%	
Handicap	94%	3%	3%	86%	7%	7%	
Loading	100%	0%	0%	80%	0%	20%	
Overall Duration	67%	17%	16%	68%	16%	16%	

Parking analysis performed on Tuesday, October 22 and Saturday November 16, 2013.

Red denotes parking durations that exceed the posted regulations

Overall, the majority of vehicles parking in the downtown area are parking for relatively short periods of time. Only 16% of vehicles were observed to park longer than two hours on both the weekday and Saturday observations. Some of the vehicles exceeding the posted regulations had residential parking permits, which allow vehicles to park with no time limitations. The majority of the residential permits were observed on Cushing Street, Chapman Street, Greenwood Avenue, and Old Colony Avenue.

City parking enforcement officers were observed ticketing vehicles in the study area during data collection. As a result of local enforcement, parking infractions in Wollaston Center are limited. Enforcement in this area is especially important given the nearby MBTA station, and regular ticketing has successfully resulted in train commuters parking in commuter lots rather than on Wollaston Center streets.

Parking Turnover

Parking turnover refers to how many vehicles are using a particular parking space in a given amount of time. A high parking turnover is generally a positive sign for a business district, as parking spaces are full and new customers arrive often. A parking turnover rate of less than 1.0 indicates a parking space is not being completely utilized each hour. The overall parking space turnover per hour was 0.5 vehicles per stall per hour during the weekday observation and 0.6 vehicles per stall per hour on Saturday. The 2 Hour and 1 Hour spaces experienced the highest turnover during the observations. Parking space turnover by type within the study area is shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Daily Parking Turnover Rate by Type of Parking

Type of Parking	Weekday (vehicles/stall/hr)	Saturday (vehicles/stall/hr)
2 Hour	0.5	0.6
1 Hour	0.5	0.6
Unrestricted/Unsigned	0.4	0.4
15 Minutes	0.3	0.5
Handicap	0.3	0.3
Loading	0.3	0.7
Overall Turnover	0.5	0.6

Parking analysis performed on Tuesday, October 22 and Saturday November 16, 2013.

Private Parking Lot Observations

A small number of private parking areas were observed during the parking study in order to understand their usage, and determine if there is any excess capacity available. If excess capacity exists in private lots in the study area, there may be an opportunity for shared parking and/or temporary leases that may benefit local employees, business patrons, residents, and future development.

MBTA Wollaston Parking Lot

As a part of the parking study, MAPC documented the occupancy and capacity of the Wollaston MBTA station parking lot. The parking lot has a capacity of 550 spaces, and a cost of \$5 per day. According to monthly utilization data provided to MAPC by the MBTA, the Wollaston parking lot is parked over capacity (110%) Monday thru Friday. The parking lot reaches full capacity before 8:30 a.m., and remains full throughout the day until about 6:00 p.m. when the lot begins to empty.

Development of the MBTA lot is a long-term goal for the City of Quincy, and the City is working with the MBTA in the short term to determine whether the lot can be utilized during evening and weekends by local employees and/or business patrons.

To better understand where people are driving from to park in the MBTA Wollaston parking lot, MAPC collected license plate data from each vehicle and compared it to Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicle record to determine the garaged location of each vehicle. Based on the matched license plate record, approximately 19% of cars parked in the lot have a garaged location within 1 mile of the Wollaston Red Line station. Approximately 54% of the vehicles originated in the City of Quincy, followed by 12% from Weymouth and 6% from Milton.⁴ This indicates that more than half of the vehicles attributing to local traffic concerns are Quincy residents who may be able to walk, bike, or use connecting bus service to access the Wollaston Red Line station. The <u>Re-Envisioning Wollaston</u> report conducted a similar study of the parking lot, and developed recommendations for improving walking and cycling conditions connecting surrounding neighborhoods to the Red Line station as a way to reduce the demand on the MBTA parking lot. **Appendix C** shows the garaged location of vehicles parked in the MBTA lot on the observation day in October.

CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits Parking

Capacity and occupancy within the privately-owned CVS and Wollaston Wine and Spirits parking lot off of Beale Street was also documented during the parking observations. The parking lot has designated areas for each of the two businesses, and has a total capacity of 92 spaces. During the weekday observation, this private lot had an average occupancy of 48%, with 78% of those vehicles parking for less than 1 hour. During the Saturday observation, the lot had an average occupancy of 56%, with 92% of those vehicles parking for less than 1 hour. This private lot currently has a surplus of approximately 20 spaces during peak demand times (Saturday mid-day).

CVS Rear Lot

At the rear of the CVS parking lot, off of Chapman Street, there are approximately 101 additional spaces designated for all-day parking at a \$3.00 daily fee. The lot is utilized by local employees and

⁴ This information is nearly identical to a previous data collection effort at the MBTA lot in March, 2013. In March, 20% of vehicles parked in the lot were based within 1 mile of the station. Approximately 55% of vehicles originated in the City of Quincy, followed by 10% from Weymouth and 6% from Milton.

MBTA commuters. The \$3.00 parking fee is \$2.00 less than what the MBTA charges, therefore this lot fills up very quickly and reaches capacity prior to 8:00 a.m. A portion of the lot is leased out as additional employee parking for the Cerebral Palsy Center on Old Colony Avenue. In October 2013, MAPC collected data on the garaged locations of the vehicles parked in this lot, similar to our approach with the MBTA lot. Based on this data, approximately 11% of cars parked in the lot are based within 1 mile of the station with 40% of the vehicles originated in the City of Quincy, followed by 26% from Weymouth and 7% from Braintree. **Appendix D** shows the garaged location of vehicles parked in the rear lot on the observation day in October.

Supreme Liquors Lot

The Supreme Liquors lot, privately owned and centrally located at the corner of Hancock Street and Woodbine Street, provides 45 parking spaces for its business patrons. Signs posted within the lot designate a 2 Hour parking restriction. Weekday observations indicate a surplus of approximately 22 parking spaces during peak demand times (mid-afternoon).

Employee Parking

As a part of the parking study, MAPC staff observed that there are no designated parking areas for employees in Wollaston Center. Some private businesses have off-street lots but some are too small to accommodate all of their employees. Many employees park on-street near their place of employment which decreases the parking available for potential business patrons. Although many of these parking spaces have time restrictions, known employee vehicles are generally not ticketed by local parking enforcement officers because of the lack of designated employee parking.⁵

MAPC recommends that the City consider working with local businesses and the Chamber to designate employee parking areas in the Wollaston Center. Providing designated spaces for employees would free up on-street parking for business patrons who may be experiencing difficulty when attempting to park in Wollaston Center. Potential employee parking areas could include:

- Supreme Liquors Lot off of Hancock Street. This private parking lot has approximately 45 parking spaces and was observed every hour during the weekday observations. The lot was never observed to be more than 51% full (resulting in 22 available spaces at the busiest time period during the day). There may be an opportunity to provide employee parking within this centrally located parking lot.
- Permitted parking on local residential streets. There was excess capacity observed on some centrally located residential streets, such as Cushing Street, Chapman Street, and Greenwood Avenue. In addition, there are likely many more residential streets with excess capacity that were outside of our study area. By utilizing a permit program, and assigning local employees with designated on-street areas for parking (avoiding a general parking permit that would likely result in some very full residential streets and some very empty streets), the City could accomplish removing employees from highly desired parking areas at a very low cost.
- Agreements among business owners. Local business owners should consider agreements
 that would allow for shared parking, resulting in employees being able to park in nearby
 private business lots when they are not being used (for instance, a restaurant could lease
 parking spaces from a neighboring bank or law office parking lot during evenings and
 weekends when the restaurant is busiest and the bank/office space is unused).

_

⁵ Determined through conversations with a local parking enforcement officer and a local business owner during parking data collection in October 2013.

- MBTA parking lot. The City of Quincy is working with the MBTA to determine whether the large commuter parking lot could be utilized (for free or for a reduced fee) by local employees and /or business patrons during evenings and weekends when the parking lot is underutilized.
- <u>CVS/Wollaston Wine and Spirits parking lot</u>. Weekday and Saturday observations identify
 this private parking area as underutilized. The lot was never observed to be more than 80%
 full (resulting in 18 available spaces at the busiest time period). There may be an
 opportunity to provide employee parking within this centrally located parking lot.

Observed Parking Violations

There were a number of areas within Wollaston Center where illegal parking was observed:

- As previously mentioned, some employees were parking for extended periods of time in parking areas meant for business patrons. These areas were primarily on Beach Street and the western portion of Hancock Street, near the post office distribution center, small offices and auto shops. Some employees place notes in their vehicles to avoid getting ticketed, and other employee vehicles are known by the local enforcement officer and do not get ticketed.
- During the morning hours, customers of the Dunkin Donuts on Hancock Street were observed parking in zones labeled "No Parking", as well as parking on the sidewalks on Chapman Street.
- Vehicles were observed parking in "No Parking" areas along Beach Street within close proximity to the Post Office. This occurred several times throughout the day.

Parking enforcement is a key element to managing the parking in a business district and ensuring that a safe environment for all roadway users is maintained. Overall, parking enforcement appears to be working relatively well with the small exceptions of the areas mentioned above. As the City evaluates strategies for improving parking in Wollaston Center, it will be important to ensure parking enforcement is distributed evenly across the entire study area.

Wollaston Business Association

As a part of this parking study, MAPC staff held two meetings with Wollaston Business Association in conjunction with the Quincy Chamber of Commerce to gain further insight on local issues and challenges businesses face in Wollaston Center. The two meetings were held on December 11, 2013 and April 16, 2014.

The first meeting consisted of a presentation by MAPC that included an overview of the parking study, data analysis results and observations, and a discussion to identify parking issues that local business owners and employees face. The second meeting focused on the draft recommendations, including ideas that address issues raised in the first meeting. MAPC staff solicited feedback and comments on the draft recommendations from the people in attendance. Overall, the recommendations were well received and the comments provided throughout both meetings helped refine the recommendations within this report.

Common themes mentioned in the meetings include:

- 1. Business owners are concerned about a lack of parking for customers, employees, and themselves. There is a strong desire for designated employee parking locations.
- 2. There appears to be no consistency in the current parking regulations in Wollaston Center, and a consistent parking regulation is requested for Wollaston Center. In addition, a uniform, comprehensive, and well-publicized policy should be implemented to identify the steps to request changes to local parking regulations should they be needed.
- 3. There is a desire to utilize the MBTA parking lot on nights/weekends for employee and customer parking. Some business owners are willing to pay a small fee for this amenity.
- 4. Two hour parking regulations are preferred Monday through Saturday, to prohibit people from parking in Wollaston Center and then taking the Red Line into Boston/Cambridge/Somerville. There is a desire to have Sundays and holidays remain unregulated.

Parking Observations and Recommendations

Throughout this parking study, a number of observations were made about the current state of parking in Wollaston Center and recommendations were made where appropriate. Observations and Recommendations are organized according to the original priorities established for Wollaston Center:

Priority: Parking should be affordable

All public parking in Wollaston Center is currently free. The only parking areas that charge a fee are the MBTA lot and the CVS rear commuter/employee lot.

Recommendation:

✓ Goal already accomplished. Continue to provide affordable parking in the future. Please note that future parking demand may require metering or pricing, but current capacity and occupancy levels indicate that they are not necessary at this time.

Priority: Parking should be available at all times

According to the data from the parking survey, average parking occupancy does not exceed 60% on either weekdays or Saturdays. There were areas that were at capacity during peak hours and other times of the day, but in general parking is always available within the study area (it just may not be in front of the business or on the block that is preferred by the business patron).

Recommendation:

✓ Goal already accomplished. Continue to provide adequate parking supply for all Wollaston Center uses in the future.

Priority: Parking regulations should be consistent

As shown in **Figure 2**, there are a number of parking regulations in Wollaston Center today, likely due to many small changes in parking regulations over time. The variety of parking regulations can result in driver confusion and/or drivers ignoring the regulations completely. The majority of spaces in the study area are 2 Hour spaces, but they vary slightly – with some having different restrictions on Sundays and/or Friday nights.









Examples of parking signage in the study area

Recommendation:

Implement a consistent 2 Hour regulation "2 Hour Parking 8am-6pm, except Sundays and Holidays" for all Wollaston Center parking spaces. Update all signage to reflect this change. Please note there may be areas (i.e. in front of the Coffee Shop) that may wish to maintain the existing 15 minute or 1 Hour regulations), these exemptions should be considered carefully and the effects on the overall parking district should be considered prior to any exemptions being approved. **Figure 5**

illustrates the existing parking regulations in the study area, along with an example of a consistent 2 Hour parking regulation.

Priority: Parking regulations should be clear and concise

As mentioned above, there are some parking signs with detailed parking regulations that are likely confusing to residents and visitors alike ("1 Hour Parking 8am-6pm Fridays 8am-9pm Except Sundays and Holidays"). In addition, some areas aren't signed for parking at all. For example, along Beale Street in front of Wollaston Wine and Spirits, there are approximately three parking spaces with no signage.





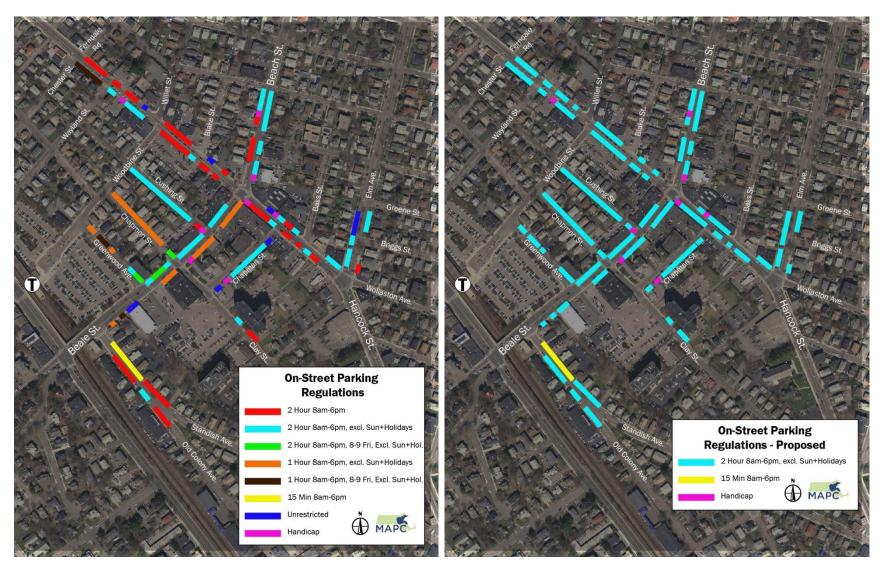
An example of a potentially confusing parking sign with Friday night restrictions (left)
An unsigned area on Beale Street that could be utilized for parking (right)

Recommendation:

Re-evaluate whether Friday evening restrictions are necessary. Provide simple and easy to understand signage for all parking areas (such as "2 Hour Parking 8am-6pm, except Sundays and Holidays")

Evaluate the areas with no signage (or striping) currently (approximately 20+ spaces throughout the study area) and determine whether parking should be allowed in those areas. If parking should NOT be allowed, install "No Parking" signs to reduce driver confusion.

Figure 5 Existing and Proposed Parking Regulations



Priority: Parking signage and regulations should be visible

There are many parking signs currently in Wollaston Center that are not visible to drivers. Some signs were faded entirely, and some signs were pointing in the opposite direction of oncoming traffic.







Signage facing away from oncoming traffic (left) and faded parking signs (center, right)

Recommendation:

After parking regulations are determined for Wollaston Center, purchase new signage and implement a database system to track signage in the area. The database would keep track of new sign purchases, installation dates, and provide updates when signage should be replaced. Update this database on a regular basis.

Priority: Parking should encourage people to park once and visit multiple destinations in one trip

Providing parking that is centrally located with reasonable time limit restrictions can encourage people to park once and walk to visit multiple destinations while they are in Wollaston Center. Parking in one location and walking can help reduce circling for parking spaces which will help reduce local traffic congestion and increase pedestrian safety. Prioritizing pedestrians within the business district further encourages this behavior, as patrons will be more willing to walk from one business to the next if it is safe to do so.

Recommendation:

Further prioritize pedestrian access, and maintain on-street spaces for business patrons rather than local employees. The <u>Re-Envisioning Wollaston</u> report includes recommendations for improving pedestrian access and safety around Wollaston Center.

Priority: Short-term parking should be prioritized in front of businesses, with long-term parking at the periphery of the business district

In general, short-term parking should be located on-street in front of businesses and all long-term parking should be located further away. No long-term employee parking should take place in front of local businesses. With the general lack of designated employee parking in Wollaston Center, some employee vehicles were observed parking for long periods of time (longer than the posted restriction) in the business district.

Recommendation:

Provide designated employee parking, and enforce parking regulations when the employee parking area is determined. Prioritize short-term parking in front of local businesses.

Priority: Parking policies should aim for 85% parking occupancy

In general, 85% parking occupancy is preferred, as spaces are generally full but there are always 1 or 2 spaces available per block. An 85% parking occupancy is generally considered the sign of a "healthy" parking district.

Recommendation:

Additional parking demand can be accommodated in the study area in the short term without the addition of new parking spaces. When parking occupancy surpasses 85%, new parking inventory may be necessary but pricing and/or shared parking techniques should be explored prior to the construction of any new parking.

In addition to the above goals, MAPC staff identified a few other issues worth noting:

Issue: Confusion at Bus Stops

All MBTA bus stops are labeled as "No Standing Tow Zones" to allow buses to pull to the curb to allow for passenger access/egress, however, one MBTA bus stop on Hancock Street has a parking sign directly below the bus stop sign that appears to allow parking. If vehicles are parked in a bus stop, loading and unloading has to occur in the street, resulting in unsafe conditions for bus riders, and potential traffic congestion on the street. In addition, there are faded "No Parking Bus Stop" signs on residential streets north of Hancock Street that do not appear to designate any active bus routes. Local residents may know to disregard these signs, but they cause confusion for visitors to the area.



Parking allowed at an MBTA bus stop (left) and an outdated bus stop sign (right)

Recommendation:

Due to pedestrian safety and handicap access concerns, parking should not be allowed at bus stops during bus operating hours. Remove all parking signs within MBTA bus stops, and/or work with the MBTA to provide parking at bus stops when buses aren't running (after 6:30pm).

Remove all old bus stops signs and replaced with approved parking signage.

Issue: Parking Space Striping

All parking spaces along Hancock and Beale Streets are outlined with paint. Some parking spaces were observed to be significantly longer than the typical length of a personal vehicle, resulting in unused space that could result in an additional parking space.



An example of a parking space that is longer than a typical personal vehicle

Recommendation:

Review parking space lengths in the corridor, and consider adjusting space lengths when the roadway is resurfaced and restriped in the future. This may result in additional parking capacity within the study area.

Issue: Lack of Employee Parking

As mentioned previously, there are no designated employee parking spaces in Wollaston Center. This results in employees parking on-street and limiting the number of parking spaces for business patrons.

Recommendation:

Designate an employee parking area, or a number of small employee parking areas. Potential parking areas are outlined in the "Employee Parking" section on pages 19-20.

Issue: Lack of Clarity regarding Parking Regulation Changes

During the meetings with the Wollaston Business Association many business owners mentioned that they were unaware of the current process to make changes or appeals regarding the existing parking regulations. Business owners believed that decisions were made by local elected officials or the City with no public or stakeholder input.

Recommendation:

Designate a process for changes to parking regulations. Publicize the process and make local business owners aware of their rights to petition for and/or against changes to the parking regulations. Consider convening a Traffic board to review proposed changes, analyze the impacts of those changes, and hear public comment regarding those changes. Changes to parking regulations should be made with all of Wollaston Center in mind, and consistency across regulations should be prioritized.

Issue: Residential Parking Permits

A number of vehicles were observed to have residential parking permits on the residential streets surrounding the MBTA station, namely Old Colony Avenue, Greenwood Avenue, Chapman Street, and Cushing Street. Residential parking permits allow people to park onstreet for unlimited periods of time without being ticketed. The permit currently costs \$20 a year and is city-wide, meaning people in Wollaston have the same permit as people in North Quincy, Quincy Center, and all other neighborhoods of Quincy. Since the permits are not neighborhood specific, people from across the City who hold permits have the ability to park on residential streets in Wollaston for long periods of time. This can take up valuable parking spaces for businesses and residents of Wollaston (or other neighborhoods) during the day. Regulations declare that permits "will only be issued to vehicles that do not have a driveway/parking space" and permits "will not be issued for convenience". Nearly all of the residences within the study area have their own private driveway, meaning either the distribution of parking permits are not adhering to the regulations adopted by the City, or people who live in other areas of Quincy are utilizing a residential permit to park in Wollaston Center to avoid paying the fee at the MBTA Wollaston lot.

Recommendation:

Revisit the current rules for parking permits and determine if the rules are outdated. If the rules for obtaining a permit are not being enforced, determine whether the permit rules should be changed and/or the rules should indeed be enforced. If there is less residential permit parking on residential streets in the future, resulting from residents parking in their driveways and/or commuters from other areas parking in the Wollaston lot, it opens up the possibility of allowing long-term employee parking on local residential streets. Providing employee parking on residential streets would be significantly less expensive than purchasing land for a parking lot, and would allow employees to park in numerous areas (and thus, closer to their particular business).

Issue: Review the location of all Handicap Parking spaces and update where appropriate
There are a number of handicap parking spaces in the Wollaston Center area. MAPC
recommends that the City review the location and number of handicap parking spaces every
few years to determine whether any changes and/or access improvements should be made.

Recommendation:

Review the usage of the handicap spaces within the study area. There may be areas that require additional handicap parking spaces, and others that may require fewer spaces.

Review the location of handicap spaces and any limitations to access for disabled drivers and/or passengers within those spaces. There are no technical requirements within the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for the design of on-street parking spaces, however, the City should locate handicap spaces in areas near sidewalk ramps, and provide additional space for the loading and unloading of wheelchairs along the vehicle.

 $^{^{6}\} quincy ma.gov/CityOfQuincy_Content/documents/forms/ParkingPermitApp12409.pdf$

Summary and Next Steps

This report is intended to serve as a baseline of parking data for the City to use to as it moves forward with the revitalization of Wollaston Center. The Wollaston Center area has the potential to change significantly if transit oriented development is prioritized in the area and parking may be needed for those uses in the future. However, at this time it does not seem appropriate to construct new parking in the study area. If new development were to take place in Wollaston Center, consider shared parking techniques if possible to avoid the construction of additional parking. For instance, if there is a residential building constructed near the MBTA station, consider utilizing the station parking lot as parking for the development as there are generally very few commuters during weeknights and weekends when residential parking demand is highest.

The results of this parking study show that there is adequate on-street parking in Wollaston Center. During observations, average occupancy was 50% during the weekday and 60% on Saturday. Peak occupancy was 58% during the weekday and 68% on Saturday, resulting in excess capacity during the peak hours.

Since peak period occupancy levels are below the target level of 85%, the area is able to handle additional demand within the existing parking supply. Within Wollaston Center there are a number of vacant first floor retail spaces. Even as those vacant spaces fill up over time, there will still be ample on-street parking available for patrons of the new businesses as well as the existing ones.

There is a perceived lack of parking in Wollaston Center by local business owners, employees, and residents. However, this parking study indicates there are generally adequate numbers of available parking spaces within a 1-2 minute walk of all businesses in the area. Business patrons desire a parking space right outside of the business that they wish to visit, and generally when that is not available, it exacerbates the perceived lack of parking availability. The City should work with the local residents, business owners, and business patrons to highlight the parking availability in Wollaston Center, and although parking may not be available right outside of the desired destination, it may be available on the next block or around the corner.

In summary, MAPC is recommending that the City, in partnership with the local Chamber and businesses, take a number of steps to improve parking in Wollaston Center:

- Implement a consistent 2 Hour regulation "2 Hour Parking 8am-6pm, except Sundays and Holidays" for all Wollaston Center parking spaces. Update all signage to reflect this change.
- > Provide simple and easy to understand signage for all parking signs
- Evaluate all unsigned areas within the study area and determine if parking should be allowed, or if "No Parking" signs should be installed
- Purchase new parking signage
- Prioritize pedestrian access and safety in the Wollaston Center area
- Designate employee parking areas so on-street spaces can be utilized by business patrons
- Re-evaluate parking supply when parking occupancy exceeds 85%
- Remove all parking spaces at MBTA bus stops
- > Remove all old bus route signage
- When study area roadways are resurfaced and restriped, review the lengths of all parking spaces and add additional parking spaces where possible
- Designate and publicize a process for changes to local parking regulations
- > Review the residential parking permit program. Consider a neighborhood-based permit program. Consider providing employee parking on residential streets.

Review all handicap parking locations and determine whether spaces should be relocated, added, or removed.

These parking improvements will lay the groundwork for other short-term and long-term recommendations highlighted in the <u>Re-Envisioning Wollaston</u> study. The parking recommendations in this study are generally all low-cost, and could be easily implemented in the near term. These small changes to existing parking policies, as well as some improvements, will help foster economic growth while not overwhelming the landscape with additional surface parking lots. These changes will also help the existing businesses in Wollaston Center and the residents, employees and patrons who frequent this area.

Appendix A

On-Street Parking Capacity and Regulations by Block

Appendix A. Parking Capacity and Regulations by Block¹

	Type of Parking					
Location	2 Hour ²	1 Hour ³	Un- restricted	15 Minute	Handicap	Loading
	On-Street Parking Spaces					
Beach St – East (Marlboro to Kemper)	9	-	-	-	-	-
Beach St — East (Kemper to Hancock)	6	-	-	-	1	-
Beach St – West (Marlboro to Hancock)	12	-	-	-	1	-
Beale St – East (Hancock to Chapman)	-	11	-	-	1	-
Beale St – East (Chapman to Old Colony)	-	5	3	-	-	-
Beale St – West (Hancock to Cushing)	6	-	-	-	-	-
Beale St – West (Cushing to Chapman)	8	-	-	-	-	-
Beale St – West (Chapman to Greenwood)	6	-	-	-	-	-
Chapman St – East (Hancock to Clay)	8	-	2		1	1
Chapman St — North (Woodbine to Beale)	2	13	-	-	-	
Clay St – North (Chapman to Nursing Home)	5	-	-	-	-	
Cushing St — South (Woodbine to Beale)	1 <i>7</i>	-	-		1	-
Elm St — East (Greene to Briggs)	6	-	-	-	-	-
Elm St — East (Briggs to Hancock)	2	-	-	-	-	-
Elm St – West (Greene to Hancock)	6	-	5	-	-	-
Greenwood Ave – North (Woodbine to Beale)	4	7	-	-	-	-
Hancock St – North (Ferndale to Willet)	9	-	1	-	-	-
Hancock St — North (Willet to Blake)	5	-	-	-	-	-
Hancock St — North (Blake to Beach)	1	-	2	-	-	1
Hancock St – North (Beach to Bass)	6	-	1		1	1
Hancock St — North (Bass to Elm)	4	-	-	-	-	1
Hancock St – South (Chester to Wayland)	-	6	-	-	-	1
Hancock St – South (Wayland to Woodbine)	8	-	-		1	1
Hancock St — South (Woodbine to Beale)	14	-	-	-	-	1
Hancock St — South (Beale to Chapman)	8	-	-		1	-
Hancock St – South (Chapman to Wentworth)	8	-	-	-	-	-
Old Colony Ave – North (Beale to Pitts)	7	-	-	9		-
Old Colony Ave — South (Beale to Pitts)	1 <i>7</i>	-	-	-	-	-
On-Street Parking Total (258 spaces)	184	42	14	9	8	1

¹Parking regulations documented in October, 2013

² Includes "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm)", "2 hour parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

³ Includes "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

Appendix B

On-Street Parking Occupancy by Block

Appendix B. Parking Occupancy by Block¹

	Parking Regulation ²	Weekday Occupancy		Saturday Occupancy	
Location		Average	Peak Hour (12pm)	Average	Peak Hour (11am)
Beach St – East (Marlboro to Kemper)	2 Hour	60%	67%	54%	44%
D	2 Hour	78%	100%	88%	83%
Beach St – East (Kemper to Hancock)	Handicap	33%	0%	30%	100%
Parish St. Mart (Marilhana to Hamasali)	2 Hour	45%	50%	35%	33%
Beach St – West (Marlboro to Hancock)	Handicap	0%	0%	0%	0%
Roals St. East (Hansack to Channan)	1 Hour	64%	91%	80%	73%
Beale St – East (Hancock to Chapman)	Handicap	17%	100%	80%	100%
Beale St – East (Chapman to Old Colony)	1 Hour	55%	60%	88%	120%
bedie 31 – Lasi (Chapinan lo Ola Colony)	Unrestricted	6%	0%	17%	33%
Beale St – West (Hancock to Cushing)	2 Hour	63%	67%	95%	83%
Beale St – West (Cushing to Chapman)	2 Hour	55%	75%	91%	75%
Beale St – West (Chapman to Greenwood)	2 Hour	69%	100%	82%	83%
	2 Hour	66%	88%	66%	100%
Chapman St – East (Hancock to Clay)	Unrestricted	25%	0%	50%	50%
	Handicap	0%	0%	40%	100%
Character St. Novik (\A/acdhira ta Barda)	2 Hour	50%	100%	85%	100%
Chapman St – North (Woodbine to Beale)	1 Hour	35%	31%	38%	69%
Clay St – North (Chapman to Nursing Home)	2 Hour	58%	20%	60%	80%
	2 Hour	40%	24%	69%	65%
Cushing St — South (Woodbine to Beale)	Handicap	58%	100%	40%	100%
Elm St — East (Greene to Briggs)	2 Hour	18%	17%	27%	17%
Elm St – East (Briggs to Hancock)	2 Hour	33%	50%	50%	100%
Flack NAME (Construction)	2 Hour	56%	83%	73%	67%
Elm St – West (Greene to Hancock)	Unrestricted	42%	40%	28%	40%
	2 Hour	75%	100%	78%	75%
Greenwood Ave – North (Woodbine to Beale)	1 Hour	57%	57%	47%	29%
	2 Hour	46%	44%	46%	78%
Hancock St – North (Ferndale to Willet)	Unrestricted	42%	0%	70%	100%
Hancock St – North (Willet to Blake)	2 Hour	40%	60%	68%	60%
	2 Hour	58%	100%	90%	0%
Hancock St — North (Blake to Beach)	Unrestricted	46%	50%	55%	100%
	2 Hour	69%	100%	92%	83%
Hancock St – North (Beach to Bass)	Unrestricted	92%	100%	70%	0%
	Handicap	75%	100%	30%	100%
Hancock St — North (Bass to Elm)	2 Hour	54%	100%	65%	50%
Hancock St – South (Chester to Wayland)	1 Hour	35%	50%	37%	83%
	2 Hour	70%	75%	81%	75%
Hancock St – South (Wayland to Woodbine)	Handicap	17%	100%	0%	0%
	2 Hour	42%	50%	46%	36%
Hancock St – South (Woodbine to Beale)	Loading	25%	100%	70%	0%

Location	Parking Regulation ²	Weekday	Occupancy	Saturday Occupancy	
		Average	Peak Hour (1pm)	Average	Peak Hour (11am)
Hancock St — South (Beale to Chapman)	2 Hour	61%	100%	81%	100%
	Handicap	17%	0%	30%	0%
Hancock St – South (Chapman to Wentworth)	2 Hour	57%	63%	69%	88%
Old Colony Ave — North (Beale to Pitts)	2 Hour	55%	57%	37%	43%
	15 Minutes	33%	11%	51%	78%
Old Colony Ave – South (Beale to Pitts)	2 Hour	57%	47%	51%	65%
On-Street Parking Total (258 spaces)		50%	58%	60%	68%

¹ Parking analysis performed on Tuesday October 22, 2013 (Weekday Data) and Saturday November 16, 2013 (Weekend data).

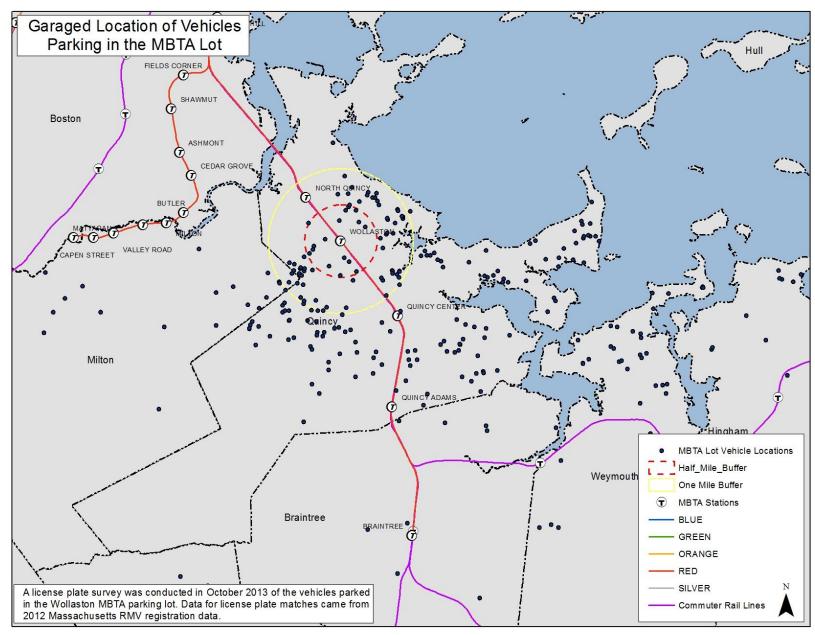
Shading indicates areas with a parking occupancy greater than 85%.

² 2 Hour Includes "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm)", "2 hour parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "2 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

¹ Hour Includes "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm) excluding Sundays and Holidays", and "1 Hour Parking (8am-6pm Monday - Saturday, 8am-9pm Friday) excluding Sundays and Holidays"

Appendix C

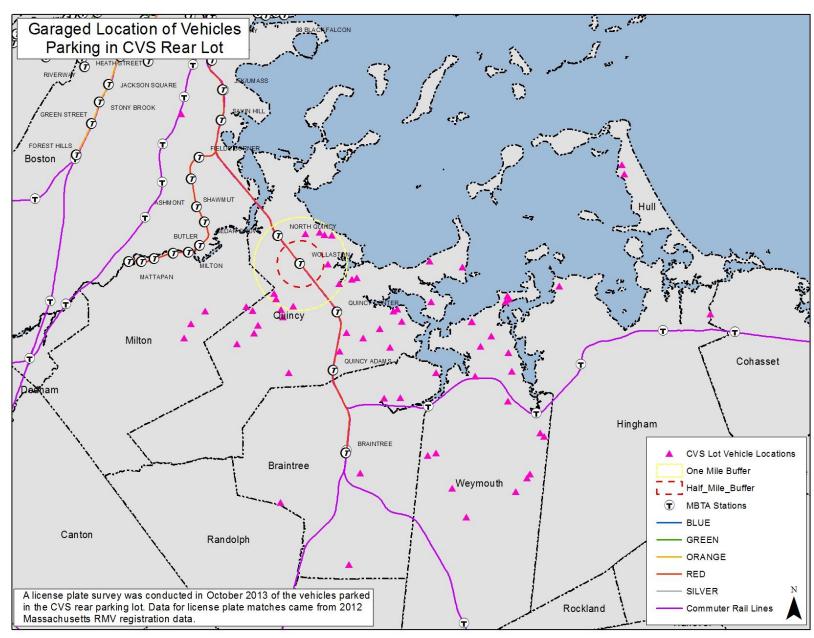
Garaged Location of Vehicles in the MBTA Parking Lot



Wollaston Center Parking Analysis Page | 37

Appendix D

Garaged Location of Vehicles in the CVS Rear Lot



Wollaston Center Parking Analysis Page | 39