

Town of Franklin Downtown Parking Assessment

Summary of Data and Recommendations



July 2008

Department of Planning & Community Development

TOWN OF FRANKLIN DOWNTOWN PARKING ASSESSMENT REPORT

Summary of Data and Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During March and April 2008 the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) planned and implemented the Downtown Franklin Parking Assessment Project to identify actual and possibly perceived problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin, and to give Administration a better understanding of ways to deal with these issues. The parking assessment project consisted of two major components, the Downtown parking assessment questionnaire and a Downtown parking space inventory, as well as additional site visits, interviews, research and analysis. DPCD staff believe there is not currently a shortage of parking spaces under normal conditions in Downtown Franklin.

While inventorying parking spaces DPCD identified 2,088 striped parking spaces in the study area, and additional areas on side streets where 2 hour parking was allowed, but formal striped parking spaces were not present. DPCD found 1,150 of the 2,088 spaces (approximately 55%) were in use during the initial inventory. During numerous additional site visits, including several to quickly assess the approximate number of Downtown parking spaces in use, DPCD staff found that on most days of the week and times of day there are a substantial number of parking spaces not being used.

At no time during the assessment project did DPCD staff observe all parking spaces utilized. If parking spaces were not available within a specific business' parking lot, a public parking space could be found a short distance away, normally within one block. However, the perception of a substantial number of individuals that completed the parking assessment questionnaire is very different. 77.8 percent of survey respondents stated they do believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin, and only 29.7 percent stated they believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin. In addition only 37.5 percent of business owners surveyed believe there is normally sufficient parking in Downtown Franklin for their customers and employees.

During DPCD's inventory of Downtown parking spaces one somewhat striking finding was the relatively few number of public parking spaces within Town owned parking lots. Not counting permit parking spaces, the Town only has 21 metered parking spaces at the two public parking lots in Downtown Franklin, and many of the meters are not operational. However, there are 58 metered parking spaces on East Central and Main Streets, and 13 more on adjacent roadways (Emmons, Dean, and Depot Streets). In addition there are several areas on side streets signed for two hour parking. Rarely are more than 80 percent of all metered public parking spaces utilized.

Without a doubt at specific locations, and at certain times of day, obtaining a parking space in Downtown Franklin can be a challenge. These locations are in most cases areas where several small businesses share relatively small parking lots on the back and or side of their buildings.

Seeing there are areas Downtown where customers occasionally have difficulty finding a parking space within the vicinity of the businesses they wish to visit, and there is a perceived shortage of parking spaces in downtown, DPCD recommends at a minimum the Town attempt to increase the number of metered and un-metered striped parking spaces in the Downtown area. Below is a list of DPCD recommendations intended to increase the number of public parking spaces in the short and long term.

- A. One fairly easy way to increase the number of available public parking spaces is by striping un-metered parking spaces on side streets within a block of Main and Central Streets in areas already posted for 2 hour parking. Striping these currently underutilized areas would formalize these parking resources, make it easier for drivers to identify the parking spaces, and likely result in increased usage and more efficient use of these on-road parking areas. DPCD staff believe 20 or more additional striped spaces can be easily added in this way, providing customer parking within a block or two of several small businesses currently having fairly frequent customer parking shortages.
- B. Assure that on and off road metered and un-metered public parking is a key component of the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project design. In the long term the Town should be able to add another 30 striped parking spaces (in addition to the 20 mentioned above)

within one block of Central and Main Streets. At least some of these parking spaces could be metered, especially those within roughly 100 feet of Main or Central Streets. Metering would assure these spaces are not used by MBTA Commuters.

- C. Repair or replace parking meters at the two Town owned public parking lots. One problem mentioned by several respondents to the parking assessment questionnaire was broken parking meters.
- Some of the permit spaces in the West Central Street parking lot have meters that are not being used; in the near future these unused meters will be used to replace broken meters in other areas.
 - In addition, DPCD recommend researching the possibility of replacing the currently used meters with a so-called “pay-by-space” metering system. Installing one such machine at the Town’s Depot Street parking lot would replace the aging parking meters at the 14 metered spaces. As these metering system machines are programmable the machine at the Depot Street parking lot could also be used to sell all day parking passes, which could replace all or at least some of the current commuter permits. Installing a new metering system machine in this one location would give the Town the opportunity to determine if going with this system throughout all of Downtown Franklin is appropriate.
- D. Make small improvements to signage at the West Central Street and Depot Street Town owned parking lots.
- E. Educate potential visitors to Downtown Franklin by providing a brochure map and web page showing the location of public parking spaces (both on and off road). These resources can be quickly developed with little cost to the Town by coordinating with Downtown businesses and the Franklin Downtown Partnership.
- F. In addition to assuring public parking spaces are an important design component during the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project, the Town needs to pay special attention to several other important parking issues, as well as pedestrian and bicycle related issues, including: signage, pedestrian linkages, pedestrian scale lighting, bicycle racks, bicycle lockers, handicapped accessibility, bus stop signage and the possibility of bus shelters; and of course determining if going with parking space metering system machines are right for Downtown.
- G. Consider increasing use of the Town’s permit spaces for business owners and employees, which would free up spaces in the business’ parking lots. Doing this would require selling less permits to commuters currently utilizing the two Downtown Town owned parking lots.
- H. Town Council asked DPCD to draft changes to the Town’s C1 Zoning District requirements; this will occur later this year. Assessing the number of parking spaces required (per 1,000 square feet of building) of new development is a very important issue, and may ultimately determine how much of a problem Downtown parking becomes in the future.

It is likely Downtown Franklin will eventually become more densely developed; DPCD recommends the Town continue to research ways to increase parking for the long term. The Town should work with business and property owners, private developers, as well as State agencies to create, enhance, and promote convenient parking in Downtown Franklin.

DPCD analysis of parking space supply and demand did not show there is currently a parking space deficit in Downtown Franklin; however, without continued attention to this important issue some Downtown small business owners will continue to have trouble providing adequate parking for their customers, and in the long term increased development pressures will likely result in more serious parking problems.

Town of Franklin Downtown Parking Assessment

Summary of Data and Recommendations

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years the Town of Franklin and its private sector partners have made revitalization of Downtown Franklin a top priority. Much has been accomplished but some very important projects need to be implemented and issues need to be assessed. In many downtown centers within Massachusetts and around the country, parking in downtown commercial and mixed-use neighborhoods is an important issue. The Franklin Downtown Partnership and others in the community believe there is a serious parking problem in Downtown Franklin, while others are not convinced. Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) staff believed an assessment of public and private parking resources and issues in Downtown Franklin was needed.

In March and April 2008 DPCD undertook the Downtown Franklin Parking Assessment. It was hoped the project would identify actual, and possibly perceived, problems regarding parking in the Downtown area, and provide the Administration with a better understanding of ways to deal with the issues.

The Parking Assessment project research consisted of two major components:

- Survey of business and property owners, employees and customers of downtown businesses, and individuals utilizing the MBTA station, and related analysis of survey data.
- Downtown parking space inventory, and related supply and demand analysis.

This document summarizes DPCD efforts to assess Downtown Franklin's parking issues, provides an outline of current parking supply and demand and related issues, supplements previous and future Downtown research projects, and serves as a guiding document that will assist the Town with continued revitalization of Downtown Franklin. This report will be used during the downtown roadway/streetscape improvement project design, and of course for consideration by business owners, potential developers, Planning Board, and Town Council.

SECTION 2. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS SUMMARY

As part of the Downtown Franklin Parking Assessment Project DPCD staff conducted a survey of Downtown property owners, business owners, employees, customers and others visiting the area including users of public transit that park in Downtown Franklin. In March 2008 DPCD developed a survey tool, the Downtown Parking Assessment Questionnaire (see Attachment A); the questionnaire was distributed, completed, and collected in April 2008. Franklin's Downtown Manager took the lead interviewing and surveying Downtown business owners and employees.

The survey tool was designed to be quickly completed by different categories of respondents. Downtown business owners, employees, customers, and MBTA Commuter Rail users were asked to answer specific questions in addition to more general survey questions. For example, once the first question was answered (*Are you a Downtown Franklin business owner?*), respondents that answered "Yes" were asked to continue on to Questions 2. Respondents answering "No" to Question 1 were asked to go to Question 18.

The results of the questionnaire are summarized in a short summary report titled *Downtown Parking Assessment Questionnaire Results and Analysis*, which is included in Attachment A. 82 questionnaires were completed and returned. The results were entered into a results database and analyzed by DPCD staff. Below is a summary of findings.

2.1 Downtown Business Owners. 10 respondents were either Downtown Franklin Business owners or completed a questionnaire for a Downtown business. The majority of respondents claiming to own a business in Downtown Franklin were small retail or service business owners with 12 or less employees. The only exception was Benjamin Franklin Bank, which has between 75 and 80 employees. All 10 respondents claiming to own a Downtown Franklin business stated they had on site parking. Of the 8 Downtown Franklin business owners that answered Question 11, all 8 stated there are people using their parking spaces that shouldn't.

Of the 8 respondents that answered Question 16, 3 answered "Yes" they believe there is normally sufficient parking in Downtown Franklin for their customers and employees; 5 respondents answered "No". Respondents answering "No" were asked to explain; in general the small businesses that share

parking areas with other businesses (9 Summer Street is a good example) have difficulty finding enough customer parking. Larger businesses with their own parking lots seem to have enough parking, as long as employees and customers of other businesses and MBTA riders don't use their spaces.

3 business owners stated that availability of parking in Downtown would prevent them from growing their business (Question 17); all 3 respondents have small businesses and share parking spaces with other small businesses, and 2 of the 3 have businesses at 9 Summer Street. In general the 3 respondents believe increases in available parking spaces will result in more customers.

2.2 Employees of Downtown Businesses. 40 respondents claim to be employees of a Downtown business (Question 20). Employees of Downtown businesses were asked where they normally park. At least 31 respondents claim to park at their place of employment, 5 of which work at Dean College and 7 were with either Benjamin Franklin or Dean Bank. At least 6 respondents did not have regular employee parking available, and stated "wherever there is a space to park", "wherever I am lucky to find a space", or similar comment.

2.3 Users of Downtown Franklin's MBTA Commuter Rail Station. 8 respondents stated they take the MBTA Commuter Rail from Downtown Franklin (Question 21); of the 8 respondents, 4 stated they drove to the station, and 4 said they did not (Question 22). Of the 4 that drove to the station, 3 stated they normally parked in the MBTA parking lot, and the other stated they parked at the "Dean lot" (Question 24). In answer to "Do you find it difficult finding a parking space near the MBTA station" (Question 25), 2 answered "Yes" and 2 answered "No". Respondents answering "Yes" were asked to explain. Both mentioned the MBTA spaces filled up quickly/early. Of the 8 respondents that take the MBTA Commuter Rail from Downtown, only 2 stated they visit businesses or other Downtown locations before or after taking the commuter rail (Question 29)

2.4 Visitors of Businesses in Downtown Franklin. 70 respondents stated they visited businesses in Downtown Franklin (Question 30). 56 respondents provided details regarding how often they visited Downtown businesses, at least 40 of whom stated they visited a business in Downtown Franklin at least once a week.

2.5 Questions Answered by all Respondents. Some of the more important questions, which were answered by all categories of respondents, show there is at least a perceived problem with parking in Downtown Franklin.

When asked "In general, do you believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin" (Question 41), 70.3 percent answered "No" (only 29.7% answered "Yes"). Further analysis of categories of respondents (e.g., business owners; employees; MBTA riders) showed roughly the same percentage of each category (66.7% to 75%) believed there are not enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin.

Of the 72 respondents that answered Question 42, 56 (77.8%) answered "Yes" they do believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin. Respondents answering "Yes" were asked to describe what they see as the greatest problem. 49 respondents provided a description. 16 of the 49 stated there was a general shortage of parking spaces or difficulty finding a parking space. 7 stated that the traffic was the worst problem, a few mentioning the traffic making on road parking difficult. Between 2 and 4 respondents mentioned one of the following problems: lack of employee parking; accessibility issues; parking meters in poor shape; non-customers using customer spaces; more spaces needed to bring in more businesses; need additional areas to expand parking; lack of MBTA parking; and parking at Franklin School for Performing Arts is a problem.

Of the 65 respondents that answered Question 43, 52 (80%) answered "Yes" they do believe something can be done to improve parking in Downtown Franklin. Respondents answering "Yes" on Question 43 were asked to explain. 48 respondents provided details. Of the 48 respondents, 24 stated that additional parking spaces of one type or another should be created. Of the 24, 10 mentioned construction of a parking garage or structure, and 7 stated an additional parking lot should be constructed. 5 respondents mentioned signage should be improved.

Respondents answering "Yes" on Question 43 were asked who should be responsible for these improvements (Question 44). By far the most common response, mentioned 29 times, was the "Town" should be responsible for these improvements. In addition to the "Town" being the mentioned 29 times,

“businesses and the Town” were mentioned an additional 6 times, meaning at least 79.5 percent of those answering Question 44 believe the Town is at least partially responsible for Downtown parking improvements. Of the 24 respondents that stated additional parking spaces of one type or another should be created (Question 43), 19 (79.2%) stated the Town should be responsible for creating the improvements.

When asked if parking negatively influenced their decision to visit/shop in Downtown Franklin versus other retail centers (Question 35), almost half (46.7%) answered yes. Analysis shows that in some cases the answers to certain questions had a direct relationship to the category of respondents. For example, 71.4 percent of business owners but only 25 percent of MBTA riders answered “yes” to Question 35, compared to 46.7 percent of all respondents.

Another example where answers to questions were influenced by category of respondent was with Question 37. When respondents were asked if they “normally find it difficult finding a parking space in Downtown Franklin 54.8 percent answered “Yes”. In comparison, 25 percent of MBTA riders and 60.5 percent of business owners answered “Yes”. This may show that the parking used by MBTA riders is either sufficient for their needs or less of a problem, but business owners are aware of problems (or at a minimum perceive problems).

In answer to the question “Are most of your Downtown visits one stop destination visits” (Question 39), 82.4 percent answered yes.

When asked “If addition parking spaces were to be proposed for Downtown, where would you like to see them” (Question 45), only 21 respondents provided suggestions, and no more than three respondents had the same answer. Answers mentioned by at least two respondents were: behind Downtown businesses; near Main Street; behind Summer Street businesses or new construction area; municipal lot; over tracks at MBTA station area; near Post Office; near Downtown businesses; and in center of Downtown near old municipal building and in back of Ben Franklin.

SECTION 3. DOWNTOWN PARKING SPACE INVENTORY

DPCD staff performed an inventory of Downtown parking spaces as part of the data collection process for the Downtown Parking Assessment. Each public and private parking space in the downtown area, both on and off road, was identified and mapped. Each identified space was assessed to obtain the following data:

- Identity of parking space owner;
- Cost, if any, for the parking space’s use and related time limits;
- Additional restrictions on the use of the parking space (e.g., handicapped spaces, loading zones, restricted to parking for specific business);
- Identity of who normally utilizes each parking space;
- Time of day the specific parking spaces are utilized.

The parking space study area included the semi-urban Downtown including the triangle formed by Emmons, Main, and Central Streets, as well as the more residential neighborhoods within several blocks of the main Downtown roadways. The Dean College campus and Central Street and adjacent roadways and parking areas between Union Avenue and Ruggles Street were included; the study area is shown on the diagram on the next page.

Maps and parking space inventory forms were developed and utilized by DPCD staff making data gathering more organized and efficient. Data was collected on maps that detailed each area surveyed and then transferred to a parking space inventory form. Data from the forms were transferred to a database and analyzed by DPCD staff; a summary of findings is below in Section 3.1.

The parking space inventory began the last week of March and was completed by mid April 2008. Parking spaces in the survey area were counted twice to assure reliable numbers. The parking space usage

numbers are based on usage counts during typical weekday business hours, Monday through Friday during the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Additional site visits were performed by DPCD staff at several different times of day, including, morning, afternoon and evening hours, and during weekends. Weekend usage counts were performed on Saturday and Sunday between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., to determine normal weekend usage of parking spaces. Saturday morning and mid-day parking space usage was assessed twice (two separate days).

Since parking spaces were formally inventoried in March and April 2008, DPCD staff have visited key Downtown areas along Central and Main Streets and at the MBTA and Town lots on many occasions (at least 10 additional site visits during May, June, and July 2008) to make certain the level of parking demand identified during the parking inventory was a good indication of normal usage. DPCD staff believe the level of parking space usage originally identified in March and April 2008 is a good baseline; percent of parking spaces utilized does differ dependent upon time of day and day of the week. As expected the percent of parking spaces utilized during summer months is less than earlier in the year when the initial parking space inventory was performed.



Downtown Franklin Parking Assessment Study Area

3.1. Supply and Demand Analysis.

DPCD staff identified 2,088 striped parking spaces in the study area. At the time of initial counting 1,150 of the spaces (55%) were being used. The spaces were not all counted on the same day or at the same time of day, so it cannot be assumed this percent of parking space usage is the norm. As mentioned above DPCD staff visited the study area on multiple occasions, including several times to quickly assess the approximate number of parking spaces in use. Each time a site visit was performed there were at least some parking spaces available. DPCD supply and demand analysis does not show a parking space

deficit in Downtown Franklin. This is not to say there are no problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin. Below are descriptions of different parking issues and type parking spaces within the study area.

Dean College. The biggest user and owner of parking spaces in Downtown Franklin is Dean College. Well over 650 spaces in the study area were on Dean College property, and many on-street spaces were being used by students or others visiting the College. In one of Dean College's parking lots on Hillside Road there are 24 spaces set aside as MBTA commuter spaces.

MBTA Commuter Rail Station Parking. The MBTA has 173 striped spaces in its Downtown commuter lot, and an additional adjacent informal parking area for MBTA personnel that can hold 4 or 5 cars. Of the 173 striped spaces, 170 (98.3%) were in use when DPCD staff originally inventoried the Downtown parking spaces; later visits during mid-day weekday showed at least 95 percent of spaces being used.

Business Parking. During the parking space inventory and additional DPCD site visits individual private parking areas in Downtown were visited. There are a wide range of different size parking lots within the study area. Depending upon time of day and day of the week, individual parking lots were anywhere from less than 10 percent to roughly 90 percent utilized. In general businesses with larger parking lots have sufficient parking for their employees and customers, and smaller businesses that share parking lots with other businesses are more challenged. Benjamin Franklin Bank has 126 parking spaces; during the inventory approximately 72 percent were being used. DPCD staff found during site visits that with several smaller businesses that have under 10 parking spaces, roughly 80 to 100 percent of their spaces were normally utilized. Some business that share parking lots with other businesses only have 1 or 2 parking spaces designated to their specific business. In many of these cases parking shortages are frequent.

Occasionally striped parking spaces in private lots are used for storage of merchandise; in one case 6 of 16 striped spaces were not available for parking vehicles because they were used for storing merchandise. In four cases striped parking spaces were used to store dumpsters.

Town of Franklin Revenue Generating Public Parking Spaces. The Town of Franklin has 187 revenue generating public parking spaces in the Downtown area. The table on the next page provides a summary.

Permit Parking Spaces. There are 53 permit parking spaces at the Depot Street lot adjacent to the MBTA parking lot, and 15 permit spaces at the Town's fairly new parking lot on West Central Street. In addition there are 27 permit spaces at Fletcher Field, which are used as backup in case of overflow; these spaces have not yet been utilized.

Approximately 50 commuter permits and 20 business permits are sold each quarter; 58 commuter permits and 18 business permits have been sold for the current quarter. Commuter permits cost \$120 for a three-month period (average of \$40 per month); business permits cost \$120 for six months (average of \$20 per month). Individuals of businesses with parking permits can park in any of the 95 permit spaces, although there are approximately 18 spaces in the Depot Street lot signed specifically for business permit parking.

Metered Parking Spaces. In total the Town has 92 parking meters in Downtown Franklin, averaging a little under \$1500 per month in collections. These metered spaces are the majority of public parking spaces available to those visiting the Downtown area. 7 metered spaces are in the fairly new parking lot on West Central Street, 14 are in the Depot Street parking lot, 58 metered spaces are on Main and East Central Streets, and 13 additional metered spaces are on side streets (Depot, Dean, Emmons). Many of the parking meters in the Depot Street and West Central Street lots are broken.

The 58 metered spaces on Main and East Central Streets are the most visible and most frequently used. When the initial parking space inventory was taking place 38 of the 58 spaces (65.5%) were being used. DPCD staff made four additional visits (April and May 2008) specifically to assess the number of these spaces being used. The first of these four visits was on a Saturday, which showed these 58 spaces in constant motion, but never more than 90 percent full. The second visit on a late Monday afternoon showed 93.1 percent of these spaces (54 of 58 spaces) being used. The two other visits were weekdays in early afternoon, which showed 63.8 percent and 70.7 percent of the 58 spaces being used. Additional visits during various times of day in late June and early July have shown approximately 55 to 70 percent of spaces being used.

**Town of Franklin Public Parking
Metered and Permit Spaces**

Location	Metered Spaces	Permit Spaces	Total Spaces
Depot Street Lot			
Permit Spaces		53	53
Meters	14		14
W. Central Street lot			
Permit Spaces		15	15
Meters	7		7
Fletcher Field			
Permit Spaces		27	27
Main Street			
Meters	34		34
E. Central Street			
Meters	24		24
Emmons Street			
Meters	5		5
Depot Street			
Meters	5		5
Dean Street			
Meters	3		3
Totals	92	95	187

Note: 187 Revenue Producing Parking Spaces in Downtown.

DPCD staff have come to the conclusion there is not currently a shortage of parking spaces under normal conditions in Down Franklin. In fact on most days of the week and times of day there are a substantial number of extra spaces. Occasionally nearly every public parking space in Downtown Franklin is utilized, but that is a rare event. One example of nearly every space being used was during the Strawberry Festival on June 20, 2008; during the event finding a parking space within a block of the festival was difficult, but most individuals seeking a parking space were able to find one within several blocks. During the event DPCD staff did two quick checks of the Town's public parking spaces, each time finding at least 4 available on-road metered parking spaces, at least two un-metered lined spaces on side streets, and multiple unlined parking spaces on side roads that are posted for two hour parking.

This is not to say there are no problems with parking in Downtown Franklin. In certain locations customers frequently have difficulty finding a parking space within the vicinity of the businesses they wish to visit. These problem locations include but are not limited to the following:

- 9 Summer Street, which is the location of the Summer Street Franklin Center Commons commercial building. Construction of adjacent buildings has resulted in a portion of spaces being used that normally would not, so this problem will possibly be remedied when construction is completed. However, it is very possible customers will need to continue using on street parking spaces, because the development was approved with a relatively small number of parking spaces. The new Franklin Center Commons building at 17 East Central Street will likely have similar problems once the first floor commercial space is leased.
- 1 through 25 Main Street, and 1 through 13 East Central Street, which contains many small businesses that share relatively small parking lots on the back and side of the buildings.
- Main Street near the Post Office, especially on Saturday morning and mid day.

In the areas listed above drivers may need to circle around before finding available public parking near their destination; occasionally drivers will park in parking lots owned by other businesses, especially in some the larger lots (e.g., Ben Franklin Bank).

Demand for parking spaces varies throughout the business day, but at most times parking can be easily found if individuals are willing to walk a block or two.

SECTION 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Without a doubt at specific locations, as with those listed above in Section 3.1, and at certain times of day, obtaining a parking space in Downtown Franklin can be a challenge. However, it appears in general at least, but definitely each time DPCD did site visits related to this project, that while certain businesses are short of parking spaces in their immediate vicinity, there are ample parking spaces available in other areas, most times as close as within one block away. There does not appear to be a large mismatch between supply and demand throughout the downtown area as a whole.

Convenience of course is an extremely important issue, especially to those visiting Downtown Franklin for one specific reason (e.g., quick stop at a bank, Post Office, or specific retailer). If a space is not quickly obtained within a short distance of a Downtown destination, many don't stop or if they do they may not return as soon as they would if parking adjacent to the location was more easily obtained.

Survey results seem to indicate most individuals (83.3%) visiting Downtown were willing to walk at least 2 minutes, and 51.6 percent of respondents claim they are willing to walk 5 or more minutes to get to their Downtown destination. But observation during site visits and discussions with business owners and others do not seem to support the survey data. Frustration finding a parking space is mentioned to business owners and public officials (including DPCD staff) even if sufficient parking spaces are as close by as one block away.

Even though DPCD staff did not identify a shortage of parking spaces in the study area, there are of course problems related to the issue. As mentioned in Section 2.5 above, 77.8 percent of survey respondents stated they do believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin, and only 29.7 percent stated they believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin. In addition only 37.5 percent of business owners surveyed believe there is normally sufficient parking in Downtown Franklin for their customers and employees. For these reasons DPCD staff recommend the Town at a minimum attempt to increase the number of metered and un-metered striped parking spaces in the Downtown area. Below are several recommendations for consideration related to Downtown parking space supply and utilization.

Creation of Additional Parking Spaces. Currently there are several areas on side streets signed for two hour parking; however most of these areas do not have striped parking spaces. These locations should be striped to better define the parking spaces, which will increase the number of parking spaces between one and two blocks away from Main and Central Streets. Striping these spaces would formalize these parking resources and likely result in increased usage and more efficient use of the spaces. For instance, currently two vehicles may be parked in an area that could easily park three or four vehicles if formal striped spaces were visible. DPCD staff believes at least 50 additional parking spaces can be striped on side streets within a block of Main and Central Streets. At least some of these better defined parking spaces could be metered, especially those within roughly 100 feet of Main or Central Streets. Metering would assure these spaces are not used by MBTA Commuters.

Designing Future Improvements. Design of the \$5 million HPP Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project will begin this summer. Sidewalk reconstruction along Dean and Emmons Streets will provide the opportunity to designate additional metered striped parking spaces on these roadways between Main and Ray Streets, and un-metered striped spaces between Ray Street and Hillside Road.

During the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project DPCD staff will assure that public parking spaces, signage, pedestrian linkages, pedestrian scale lighting and other amenities are designed into the proposed improvements. In conjunction with the Downtown roadway and streetscape design this summer DPCD staff will work with Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) on two additional pedestrian related studies:

- Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements in Urban Centers Project. The project will identify strategies to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and safety within Downtown Franklin (and five other urban centers). These proposed pedestrian and bicycle improvements may be included in the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project.
- Boston Region MPO's Walkable Community Workshop. CTPS planners will work with Franklin officials and residents to assess the "walkability" and pedestrian safety issues in the Downtown area, as well as work to develop recommendations for improvements. The workshop will include a walking audit of the study area. Again, the proposed improvements can be included in the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvement project.

Pay-By-Space Metering System. In addition to the improvements mentioned above DPCD staff recommend researching the installation of a so-called "pay-by-space metering system in Downtown Franklin. These programmable machines could replace all existing meters, and can be used for the additional metered locations proposed above. In addition to replacing meters, which are used for pay as you go hourly parking only, the machines can be used for purchasing parking permits and whole day parking passes for the commuter parking spaces. DPCD staff will provide Franklin's Town Administrator with a detailed assessment of this technology during the next few weeks so the information is available when the Town begins designing the Downtown roadway and streetscape improvements.

Increase Business Use of Town Permit Spaces. One problem identified with both the survey and inventory and follow up site visits was the shortage of customer and employee parking at the new development at 9 Summer, as well as on East Central and Main Streets where parking lots are shared by multiple businesses. DPCD staff recommend Downtown businesses contact the Town regarding leasing some of the Town's permit parking spaces. Currently 18 permit spaces are used by businesses.

The Town has an 27 permit parking spaces south of Downtown at Fletcher Field in case of overflow. These spaces have not been utilized yet, likely because they are approximately 0.325 mile (1650+ feet) from the corner of Cottage and Central Streets, and approximately 0.4 mile (2100+ feet) to the MBTA commuter station. It is DPCD staff's belief that with Downtown Franklin as it is today, rarely will anyone drive into Downtown Franklin and then walk four tenths of a mile to get to the commuter train; this may change in the future if the region experiences substantial increases in transit use. However, Downtown businesses owners struggling to assure parking is available for customers may consider leasing these spaces for themselves or their employees. Currently commuter use of the Town's permit spaces consumes the majority of the Town's public parking lot spaces. Use of a larger percent of these permit spaces by Downtown businesses would be in the Town's interest.

Education. DPCD staff believe educating potential visitors to Downtown Franklin can be easily accomplished and would result in increased visitation to area businesses. DPCD recommends development of a brochure map showing the location of public parking spaces (both on and off road). In addition, improved signage at the West Central Street parking lot and other locations will be helpful.

C1 Zoning District Requirements. DPCD have been asked to look at rewriting the C1 Zoning District requirements including the number of parking spaces required per 1,000 square feet. Many understand the Town's Commercial I zoning district requires no parking and therefore assume parking is the responsibility of the municipality. However, that assumption is not valid unless the community has limitless funds in which to create parking, which of course it does not. With the case of the Franklin Center Commons project, sufficient parking is very important to retailers considering settling in downtown Franklin. A lack of parking at key Downtown locations creates frustration and results in less business for retailers.

In the Future. As the Downtown area will eventually become more dense, DPCD recommends the Town continue to research ways to increase parking for the long term. This may be accomplished by the Town of Franklin working alone to increase public parking areas, but it's much more likely the Town working in partnership with business/property owners and the MBTA is what is needed in Downtown Franklin. In the long term structured parking may be required; if so, the cost of these improvements will likely be shared between public and private parties. The public and private sectors need to work together to enhance and promote convenient shared parking.

DOWNTOWN PARKING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS.

As part of the Downtown Franklin Parking Assessment Project DPCD staff conducted a survey of Downtown property owners, business owners, employees, customers and others visiting the area including users of public transit that park in Downtown Franklin. In March 2008 DPCD developed a survey tool, the Downtown Parking Assessment Questionnaire; the questionnaire was distributed, completed, and collected in April 2008.

The survey tool (see attached) was designed to be quickly completed by different categories of respondents. Downtown business owners, employees, customers, and MBTA Commuter Rail uses were asked to answer specific questions in addition to more general survey questions. For example, once the first question was answered (*Are you a Downtown Franklin business owner?*), respondents that answered "Yes" were asked to continue on to Questions 2. Respondents answering "No" to Question 1 were asked to go to Question 18.

Franklin's Downtown Manager took the lead interviewing and surveying Downtown business owners and employees. Results from the 82 questionnaires that were completed and returned were entered into a results database and analyzed by DPCD staff. The results of the questionnaire are summarized below.

Question 1. Are you a Downtown Franklin business owner?

Of the 76 respondents that answered Question 1, 10 answered "Yes" they were a Downtown Franklin business owner. The 10 respondents claiming to own a Downtown Franklin business answered Questions 2 through 17. Respondents answering "No" on Question 1 were told to go to Question 18.

Specific Questions for Downtown Franklin Business Owners Questions 2 through 17.

Questions 2 through 17 listed below are questions asked specifically to Downtown Franklin business owners:

- Question 2. What is the name of your business?
- Question 3. What is your business location? (street address)
- Question 4. What type of business do you own?
- Question 5. What days and hours are you open for business?
- Question 6. What are your peaks hours? (most customers)
- Question 7. How many employees do you have?

Table A on Page 2 summarizes the answers to these six questions. The majority of respondents claiming to own a business in Downtown Franklin were small retail or service business owners with 12 or less employees. The only exception was an individual completed the questionnaire for Benjamin Franklin Bank, which has between 75 and 80 employees.

Question 8. On an average how long are your customers in your place of business? a. Under 10 minutes; b. 10 to 30 minutes; c. 30 to 60 minutes; d. Over 60 minutes.

Of the 10 respondents answering Question 8, 3 chose more than one answer, meaning some customers remained in their place of business longer, in some cases much longer, than other customers. Answers were fairly evenly spread throughout the four lengths of time; 50 percent of respondents (5 individuals) chose "30 to 60 minutes". The other 3 times "Under 10 minutes", "10 to 30 minutes", and "Over 60 minutes" were chosen by 30 to 40 percent of respondents.

Question 9. Do you have on-site parking?

All 10 respondents claiming to own a Downtown Franklin business answered "Yes" they had on site parking.

Question 10. If yes, how many parking spaces?

8 respondents answered Question 10. Benjamin Franklin Bank has 126 parking spaces. The other 7 respondents that answered Question 10 appear to have between 1 and 5 spaces available for customers and employees.

Table A. Summary of Answers to Questions 2 through 7

Questions 2 & 3	Question 4.	Questions 5 & 6	Question 7.
Business Name & Address	Type of Business	Days/Hours Open Peaks Hours?	Number of Employees
Emma's Quilt Cupboard 12 Main Street	Retail	M-Sat 10-6	8
Berry Insurance 5-11 Main Street	Insurance Agency	M-F 8-5	12
Jane's Frames 11 East Central Street	Custom picture framing and art gal.	Tu & W 10-6; Th 10-8; Sat 10-3 12-2	2
Murray Insurance 9 Summer Street	Insurance	Aprox. 8-4:30 n/a	0
Simons Furniture 8 Summer Street.	Retail	M-F 10-8; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-5 Mon, Fri, Sat, Sun	12
Benjamin Franklin Bank 58 Main Street	Bank	M,T,W 8:30-4; Th,F 8:30-7; Sat 8:30-12 8:30-4	75 - 80
Franklin Foot Care 9 Summer Street #202	Podiatric	M-F 8:30-6	8
Pretty is Pink 9 Summer St Street	Retail clothing	Tu-S 9-5:30 1-5	5
Artbeat the Creativity Store 9 Summer Street Unit 101	Retail gift, toy, and art supplies, with walk-in art studio.	M 12-6; Tu & W 10-6; Th & F 10-8; Sat 10-5; Sun 12-5 M-F 10-12/1 & after 3; Sat AM; Sun PM	4
Salon Elan Inc 32 Main Street	Service Salon	Tu-F 10-9; Sat 8-3 10 - 9	7

Question 11. If you answered Yes on Question 9, do people use your parking spaces that should not?

Of the 8 respondents that answered Question 11, all 8 answered "Yes" there are people using their parking spaces that shouldn't. Respondents answering "Yes" were asked to describe who and when. 5 respondents provided some details. All four businesses located on Main Street appear to have problems with people using their parking spaces that are not visiting or employed by their specific Main Street business. Three Main Street businesses claim their parking spaces are utilized by customers and employees of other downtown businesses; one of these three businesses and one additional Main Street business claim their parking spaces are used by MBTA commuter rail users. One business at 9 Summer Street claims there are not nearly enough parking spaces at her location; this parking shortage is created by the landlord not providing as many spaces as was originally agreed, adjacent businesses not having enough parking, and at times spaces are used by local construction projects.

Question 12. If you answered Yes on Question 9, do you have sufficient parking spaces for: 12a. Your customers? 12b. Your employees?

All 10 respondents claiming to own a Downtown business answered Question 12. In answer to the question "Do you have sufficient parking spaces for your customers", 6 respondents answered "Yes and 4 answered "No". In answer to the question "Do you have sufficient parking spaces for your employees", 5 respondents answered "Yes and 5 answered "No". 4 of the 10 respondents answering Question 12 stated they had sufficient parking spaces for their customers and employees. The other 6 respondents

claim to not have sufficient parking spaces for either their customers or employees, or both. 3 respondents stated they did not have sufficient parking spaces for their customers or their employees; all three of these respondents claimed to own a business at 9 Summer Street. Respondents stating that their on-site parking was not sufficient were asked to answer Questions 13 through 15.

Question 13. How many parking spaces do you need for your employees?

8 respondents answered Question 13. Benjamin Franklin Bank needs 75 to 80 spaces for their employees, which they have. Simon Furniture needs 7 parking spaces, and the other 6 respondents stated they needed between 1 and 5 spaces for their employees. Respondents were asked where their employees park; 6 respondents provided details, 5 of which stated they parking in employee parking spaces or near the building. 1 respondent answered “anywhere they can find a space”.

Question 14. How many parking spaces do you need for your customers? Where do customers park?

8 respondents answered Question 14. Benjamin Franklin Bank stated they need “all spaces close to the bank marked customer spaces; Simon Furniture needs 20 parking spaces for customers. 3 respondents claim to need 8 to 10 spaces and 3 respondents need between 1 and 3 spaces for customers. Respondents were asked where their customers park; 6 respondents provided details. Answers by several respondents showed a level of frustration (e.g., “they wait or look around”, “they don’t come in until they can find a space”).

Question 15. How long does it take to walk from your place of business to the parking locations mentioned in your answers to Question 13 and Question 14? Employees Customers; a. Under 1 minute; b. 1 to 2 minutes; c. 2 to 5 minutes; d. Over 5 minutes.

6 respondents answered Question 15; of the 6 respondents 1 chose more than one answer. 5 respondents answered “under 1 minute” and 2 respondents answered “2 to 5 minutes”.

Question 16. Do you believe there is normally sufficient parking in Downtown Franklin for your customers and employees?

Of the 8 respondents that answered Question 16, 3 answered “Yes” they believe there is normally sufficient parking in Downtown Franklin for their customers and employees. 5 respondents answered “No”. Respondents answering “No” were asked to explain. In general the small businesses that share parking areas with other businesses (9 Summer Street is a good example) have difficulty finding enough customer parking. Larger businesses with their own parking lots seem to have enough parking, as long as employees and customers of other businesses and MBTA riders don’t use their spaces.

Question 17. Would availability of parking in Downtown prevent you from growing your business?

Of the 9 respondents that answered Question 17, 3 answered “Yes” availability of parking in Downtown would prevent them from growing their business; all 3 respondents have small businesses and share parking spaces with other small businesses. 2 of the 3 respondents answering “Yes” have businesses at 9 Summer Street. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to explain. In general the 3 respondents believe increases in parking spaces will result in more customers. One respondent stated “patients will go somewhere else”.

Question 18. Other than a business referred to in Question 1, do you own property in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 74 respondents that answered Question 18, only 1 claim to own property in Downtown Franklin other than a business referred to in Question 1. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to describe the property; the 1 respondent answering “Yes” to Question 18 left the section on the survey blank. A simple analysis comparing answers to Question 1 and Question 18 shows that the 1 respondent that answered “Yes” on Question 18 was not one of the individuals that claimed to own a Downtown business.

Question 19. If you answered Yes on Question 18, are there parking spaces on the property that are: 19a. Used by local businesses? 19a. Used by visitors to the area?

The 1 respondent that answered “Yes” on Question 18 claims the property is used by local businesses, but not visitors to the area.

Question 20. Are you an employee of a Downtown Business?

Of the 68 respondents that answered Question 20, 40 (58.8%) claim to be employees of a Downtown business. Respondents answering “Yes” they were an employee of a Downtown business were asked where they normally park. 39 respondents provided a description of where they park. At least 31 of the 39 respondents claim to park at their place of employment, 5 of which work at Dean College and 7 were with either Benjamin Franklin or Dean Bank. At least 6 respondents did not have regular employee parking available, and stated “wherever there is a space to park”, “wherever I am lucky to find a space”, or similar comment.

Question 21. Do you take the MBTA Commuter Rail from the Downtown Franklin station?

Of the 70 respondents that answered Question 21, 8 (11.4%) answered “Yes” they take the MBTA Commuter Rail from Downtown Franklin. Respondents that answered no were asked to go to Question 30. Respondents that take the MBTA Commuter Rail from Downtown Franklin were asked to answer Questions 22 through 29.

Specific Questions for MBTA Commuter Rail Users**Questions 22 through 29.****Question 22. If you answered Yes on Question 21 do you normally drive to the station?**

Of the 8 respondents that answered Question 22, 4 answered “Yes” they drove to the station, and 4 answered “No” they did not.

Respondents answering “No” were asked to go to Question 29. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to answer Questions 23 through 28.

Question 23. How far do you normally drive to get to the MBTA Station?

4 respondents answered Question 23; answers were ½ mile; 3 miles; 4 miles and 10 minutes.

Question 24. Where do you normally park?

Of the 4 respondents that answered Question 24, 3 stated they parked in the MBTA parking lot, and the other stated they parked at the “Dean lot”.

Question 25. Do you find it difficult finding a parking space near the MBTA station?

Of the 4 respondents that answered Question 25, 2 answered “Yes” and 2 answered “No”. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to explain. Both mentioned the MBTA spaces filled up quickly/early.

Question 26. Do you normally park in a MBTA parking space?

The 4 respondents that answered Question 26 all answered “Yes”.

Question 27. Do you rent a parking space from the Town of Franklin?

The 4 respondents that answered Question 27 all answered “No”.

Question 28. Do you rent a parking space from another public or private property owner?

The 4 respondents that answered Question 28 all answered “No”.

Question 29. Do you visit businesses or other Downtown locations before or after taking the commuter rail?

14 respondents answered Question 29; 3 answered “Yes” and 11 answered “No”. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to provide specifics; 2 respondents provided details (go to bank, grab paper, errands; restaurants). Of the 8 respondents that answered “Yes” on Question 21 (they take the MBTA Commuter Rail from Downtown Franklin), 2 answered “Yes” they visit business or other Downtown locations before or after taking the commuter rail.

Question 30. Do you visit businesses in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 77 respondents that answered Question 30, 70 (90.9%) answered “Yes” they did visit businesses in Downtown Franklin. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to describe how often. 56 respondents

provided details regarding how often they visited Downtown businesses. At least 40 respondents stated they visited a business in Downtown Franklin at least once a week. Of the 40, at least 7 visited Downtown businesses daily, and 12 respondents visited Downtown businesses at least twice a week. 8 additional respondents answered they visited Downtown businesses at least twice a month; three answered “occasionally”.

Question 31. How long does it take to walk from your normal parking location to the business you are visiting? a. Under 1 minute; b. 1 to 2 minutes; c. 2 to 5 minutes; d. Over 5 minutes.

75 respondents answered Question 31. A summary of answers is provided in Table B.

Table B. Summary of Answers to Question 31.

How long does it take to walk to the business you are visiting?	Number and Percent of Respondents	
Answer	Number	Percent
a. Under 1 minute	16	21.3%
b. 1 to 2 minutes	29	38.7%
c. 2 to 5 minutes	26	34.7%
d. Over 5 minutes	4	5.3%
Totals	75	100.0%

Question 32. Are there locations Downtown that you would visit more often if there were more convenient parking spaces available

72 respondents answered Question 32. 30 (41.6%) respondents answered “Yes” there were locations Downtown they would visit more often if there were more convenient parking spaces available. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to describe specifics. 17 respondents provided details; at least 7 respondents mentioned specific restaurants or restaurants in general; 3 mentioned the post office, and at least 8 mentioned specific shops or retail in general on Main or Summer Street.

Question 33. Are there specific days or times of day you intentionally avoid visiting Downtown because you find it difficult finding a parking space?

Of the 71 respondents that answered Question 33, 29 (40.8%) responded “Yes”, while the remaining 42 answered “No”. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to describe specifics. 8 respondents mentioned Saturdays. 6 respondents mentioned late afternoon or 5/6 p.m., and the following answers were mentioned by at least 2 respondents: nights; weekends and always.

Question 34. What days of the week and time a day do you visit businesses or other locations Downtown?

54 respondents answered Question 34; many of the respondents gave more than one day and or time of day. Weekdays during the day (weekday mornings; M-F 9 to 5; weekday afternoons; weekday at noon) were mentioned by at least 66 percent of respondents. The common responses are listed in Table C.

Table C. Summary of Answers to Question 34.

Days of Week and or Time of Day	Number of Responses
Weekday Mornings	13
Monday through Friday 9 to 5	10
Weekday Afternoons	9
Weekdays at Lunchtime or around noon	9
Weekends, or Saturday	8
Evenings	8
Varies	6
Any time	3

Question 35. Does parking negatively influence your decision to visit/shop in Downtown Franklin versus other retail centers?

Of the 75 respondents that answered Question 35, 35 (46.7%) answered “yes” parking negatively influenced their decision to visit/shop in Downtown Franklin versus other retail centers, and 40 (53.3%) answered “No”.

An analysis showing the relationship between Questions 1, 20, 21, 30 and answers to Question 35 show that in some cases the answer to Question 35 may have a direct relationship to the category of respondents. For example, 71.4 percent of business owners and 25 percent of MBTA riders answered “yes”, compared to 46.7 percent of all respondents. Table D provides a summary of responses by category of respondent.

Table D. Does Parking Negatively Influence Your Decision to Visit/Shop in Downtown?

Category of Respondents	Total Respondents	Number and Percent of Respondents			
		Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Downtown Business Owners	7	5	71.4%	2	28.6%
Employees of Downtown Business	39	19	48.7%	20	51.3%
Take MBTA from Downtown	8	2	25.0%	6	75.0%
Visit Businesses in Downtown Franklin	67	31	46.3%	36	53.7%
All Respondents	75	35	46.7%	40	53.3%

Question 36. How far are you willing to walk (in minutes) from where you park to your Downtown destination?

64 respondents answered Question 36. Of the 66 respondents, 33 (51.6%) claim they are willing to walk 5 or more minutes from where they park to their Downtown destination. A summary of responses is listed below in Table E.

Table E. Summary of Answers to Question 36.

How Far Are You Willing to Walk?	Number of Responses
1 Minute	5
1-2 Minutes	4
2 Minutes	10
2-3 Minutes	2
3 Minutes	6
3-5 Minutes	3
Less than 5 Minutes	1
5 Minutes	21
More than 5 Minutes	2
5-10 Minutes	5
10 Minutes	5

Question 37. Do you normally find it difficult finding a parking space in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 73 respondents that answered Question 37, 40 (54.8%) answered “Yes” they normally find it difficult finding a parking space in Downtown Franklin; 33 (45.2%) answered “No”. As with the answers to Question 35, analysis shows that the answer provided may have a direct relationship to the category of respondents. Table F provides a summary of responses by category of respondent.

Table F. Do You Normally Find it Difficult Finding a Parking Space in Downtown?

Category of Respondents	Total Respondents	Number and Percent of Respondents			
		Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Downtown Business Owners	7	4	57.1%	3	42.9%
Employees of Downtown Business	38	23	60.5%	15	39.5%
Take MBTA from Downtown	8	2	25.0%	6	75.0%
Visit Businesses in Downtown Franklin	67	35	52.2%	32	47.8%
All Respondents	73	40	54.8%	33	45.2%

Question 38. Is it easier to find parking at certain Downtown locations than others?

Of the 69 respondents that answered Question 38, 37 (53.6%) answered “Yes” it was easier to find parking at certain Downtown locations than others. Respondents answering “Yes” were asked to describe. 32 respondents provided a description of where it was easier to park Downtown; the most common responses were “bank parking lots” and “businesses that have their own parking lots”, each mentioned by 7 respondents, and the Post Office mentioned 6 times. The “new Town parking lot” or Town lot” was mentioned 4 times.

Question 39. Are most of your Downtown visits one stop destination visits.

Of the 68 respondents that answered Question 39, 56 (82.4%) answered “Yes” most of their Downtown visits were one stop destination visits.

Question 40. How often do you park your vehicle and walk to more than one business or other Downtown location during the same trip?

48 respondents answered Question 40. A summary of the most common responses is listed below in Table G.

Table G. Summary of Most Common Answers to Question 40.

How often do you park your vehicle and walk to more than one Downtown location?	Number of Responses
Daily	4
Few times a week	3
Once or twice a week	7
Often or Frequently	5
Once or twice a month	6
Not often or rarely	13
Never	3

Question 41. In general, do you believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 74 respondents that answered Question 41, only 22 (29.7%) answered “Yes” they do believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin. A simple analysis showing the relationship between Questions 1 and 41 show of the 9 respondents that answered both questions and are Downtown Franklin business owners, 3 (33.3%) believe there are enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin.

Further analysis of other categories of respondents shows roughly the same percentage of each category (66.7% to 75%) believe there are not enough parking spaces in Downtown Franklin. Table H provides a summary of answers.

Table H. Do you believe there are enough parking spaces?

Category of Respondents	Total Respondents	Number and Percent of Respondents			
		Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Downtown Business Owners	9	3	33.3%	6	66.7%
Employees of Downtown Business	37	10	27.0%	27	73.0%
Take MBTA from Downtown	8	2	25.0%	6	75.0%
Visit Businesses in Downtown Franklin	68	21	30.9%	47	69.1%
All Respondents	74	22	29.7%	52	70.3%

Question 42. Do you believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 72 respondents that answered Question 42, 56 (77.8%) answered “Yes” they do believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin. Analysis of each category of respondents shows roughly the same percentage of each category (77.3% to 88.9%) believe there are problems related to parking in Downtown Franklin. Table I provides a summary of answers.

Table I. Do You Believe There are Problems Related to Parking in Downtown Franklin?

Category of Respondents	Total Respondents	Number and Percent of Respondents			
		Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Downtown Business Owners	9	8	88.9%	1	11.1%
Employees of Downtown Business	37	29	78.4%	8	21.6%
Take MBTA from Downtown	8	7	87.5%	1	12.5%
Visit Businesses in Downtown Franklin	66	51	77.3%	15	22.7%
All Respondents	72	56	77.8%	16	22.2%

Respondents answering “Yes” on Question 42 were asked to describe what they see as the greatest problem. 49 respondents provided a description. 16 of the 49 stated there was a general shortage of parking spaces or difficulty finding a parking space. 7 stated that the traffic was the worst problem, a few mentioning the traffic making on road parking difficult. Between 2 and 4 respondents mentioned one of the following problems: lack of employee parking; accessibility issues; meters in poor shape; non-customers using customer spaces; more spaces needed to bring in more businesses; need additional areas to expand parking; lack of MBTA parking; and parking at FSPA is a problem.

Question 43. Do you believe anything can be done to improve parking in Downtown Franklin?

Of the 65 respondents that answered Question 43, 52 (80%) answered “Yes” they do believe something can be done to improve parking in Downtown Franklin. A simple analysis showing the relationship between Questions 1 and 43 show of the 8 respondents that answered both questions and are Downtown Franklin business owners, all 8 answered “Yes” something can be done to improve parking in Downtown Franklin. An analysis of each category of respondents is below in Table J.

Respondents answering “Yes” on Question 43 were asked to explain. 48 respondents provided details. Of the 48 respondents, 24 stated that additional parking spaces of one type or another should be created. Of the 24, 10 mentioned construction of a parking garage or structure, and 7 stated an additional parking lot should be constructed. 5 respondents mentioned signage should be improved. At least 2 respondents mentioned one of the following: promote existing parking; ticket to discourage non-customer parking space usage; satellite parking lots; and parking permits for designated spaces or designated spaces for specific stores.

Table J. Can Anything Be Done to Improve Parking in Downtown?

Category of Respondents	Total Respondents	Number and Percent of Respondents			
		Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Downtown Business Owners	8	8	100.0%	0	0.0%
Employees of Downtown Business	31	25	80.6%	6	19.4%
Take MBTA from Downtown	7	7	100.0%	0	0.0%
Visit Businesses in Downtown Franklin	60	47	78.3%	13	21.7%
All Respondents	65	52	80.0%	13	20.0%

Question 44. If yes on Question 43, who do you believe should be responsible for these improvements?

44 respondents answered Question 44. By far the most common response, mentioned 29 times, was the "Town" should be responsible for these improvements. Of the 24 respondents that stated additional parking spaces of one type or another should be created, 19 stated the Town should be responsible for the improvements. In addition to the "Town" being the mentioned 29 times, "businesses and the Town" were mentioned an additional 6 times. Landlords, DPW, residents, police, and MBTA were all mentioned once or twice depending upon which improvement was suggested.

Question 45. If addition parking spaces were to be proposed for Downtown, where would you like to see them?

27 respondents answered Question 45; 6 of the 27 respondents wrote "don't know", "?", "not sure", or a similar answer. Of the remaining 21 respondents no more than three had the same answer. Answers mentioned by at least two respondents were: behind Downtown businesses; near Main Street; behind Summer Street businesses or new construction area; municipal lot; Over tracks at MBTA station area; near Post Office; near Downtown businesses; and in center of Downtown near old municipal building and in back of Ben Franklin.

Comments

21 respondents provided comments at the end of the questionnaire; others provided comments throughout detailing specific answers. These comments are all provided in Table K below.

Table K: Comments

Survey #	Comments
7	The problem is more with the average customer today, sadly- they are not adept at parallel parking, and they don't like to walk. Parking behind buildings w/a "pleasant" alley connecting to street may help. Please do all you can to bring business to Franklin - a thriving downtown would be lovely. Coffee shop, bookstore, good retail - We live in Wrentham and would support it. Good luck!
10	#30-40 are not applicable since I work in downtown.
13	The installation of a single level parking deck should be built in the center of town over the train tracks. I have a plan proposed in 1965 in my possession if you would like to consider the concept. This concept would be central to the downtown, would be easily accessible and could be used by employees and patrons.
14	If the meters are used to discourage commuters from using up the spaces, then after a certain time, parking should be free.
16	Right now with construction, we are experiencing a high number of non customers parking in our lot. We are constantly asking them to move due to construction on the Marini Project. The car place needs to move their cars and allow his tenants to park there.
20	Refer to diagram on actual survey.

Table K: Comments (Continued)

Survey #	Comments
25	The turn from E Central onto main is very difficult since many individuals stop and wait to turn causing traffic.
34	Parking Plan is important piece of revitalization as discussed year ago.
37	I would discourage returning to 2 way traffic in downtown.
42	I can't really answer most of these questions because I don't live in Franklin I just work here.
43	Employee parking lot makes parking not an issue for me. Also the boundaries of "downtown" have not been clearly defined.
48	The new lots that have been added near Alpine Place and behind the old movie theater will add much needed parking to downtown Franklin. I live in town and am not sure if those lots are private or free; there should be signs to direct the public to these available spaces.
49	You could angle the parking on one side to make more spaces.
51	A parking garage behind MBTA would be convenient without ?
63	I go to Medway to go to the post office, banks, shops as it is easier to get around and free parking in all lots.
64	It is always a little scary switching lanes downtown; there isn't a lot of time to switch before you are onto 140 or continuing on Main St.
65	We need more new businesses downtown.
67	I also see a problem with commuter parking. There are not enough spaces.
68	The money the town has (1.5 million) for parking can be used for parking lot as planned 4 years ago.
81	I did not use Allegra printing when they were downtown because parking was too difficult. Now they moved and have convenient parking so I use them.
82	When I'm arriving to work it would be nice to know I have a place to park and not worry.