

Downtown Mystic Parking Study Next Steps



Groton Town Council, March 22, 2022

John M. Burke, PE, CAPP, Consultant
Parking, Transit & Downtown Development

Consultant Qualifications

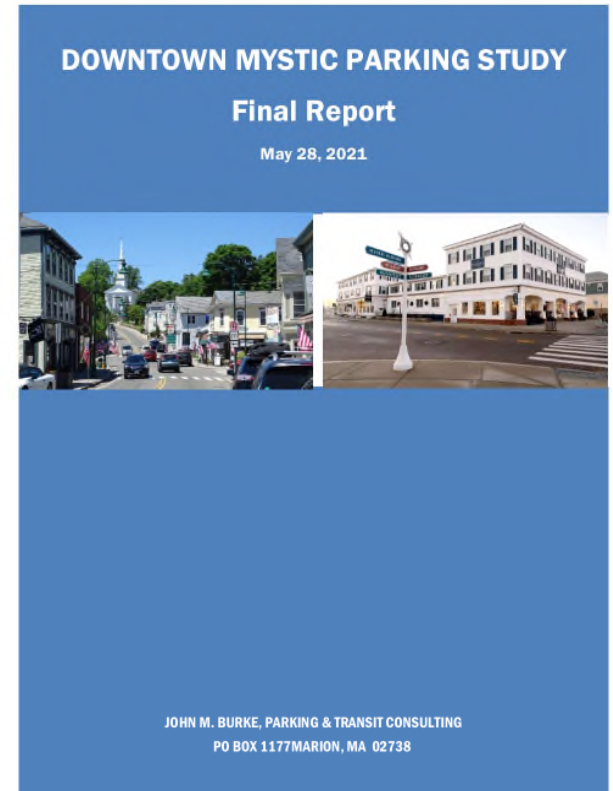
- **John M. Burke, P.E., CAPP, Parking & Transit Consultant**
- **30+ years parking & transportation industry experience**
- **Former City Parking & Transportation Director**
 - Portsmouth, NH
 - Evanston, IL
- **12 years independent consulting practice in New England**
- **Select Coastal New England municipal clients:**

- Narragansett, RI	- Rye, NH
- Newport, RI	- Portsmouth, NH
- Plymouth, MA	- Camden, ME
- Newburyport, MA	- Bar Harbor, ME



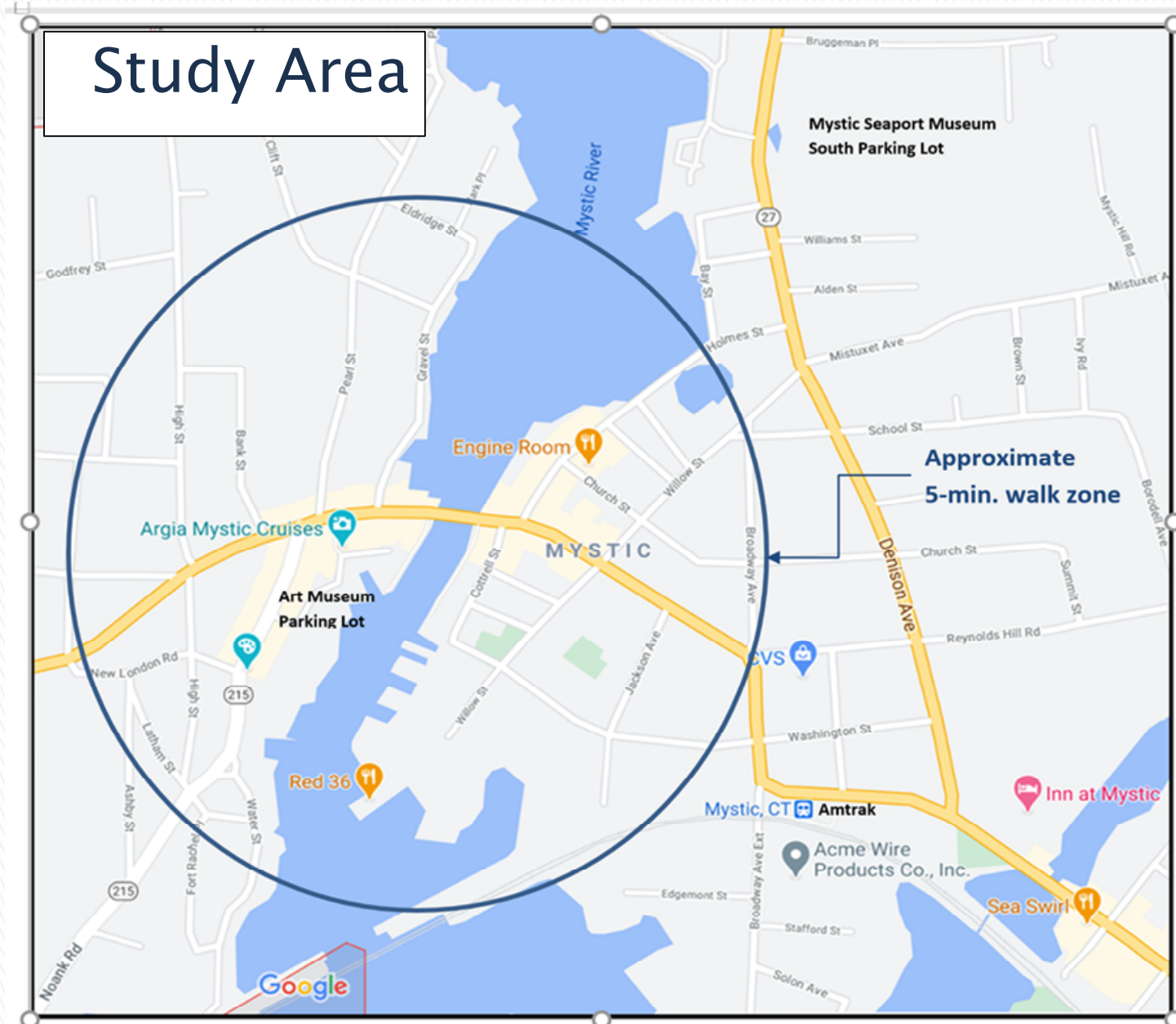
Scope of Service

1. Confirm the Study Area
2. Establish Guiding Parking Principles
3. Conduct Key Stakeholder Interviews
4. Conduct Parking Inventory
5. Conduct Parking Occupancy Survey
6. Conduct Time-Zone Compliance Survey
7. Conduct Parking Efficiency Analysis
8. Identify Key Findings & Deficiencies
9. Recommend Parking Improvements
10. Conduct Public Presentation



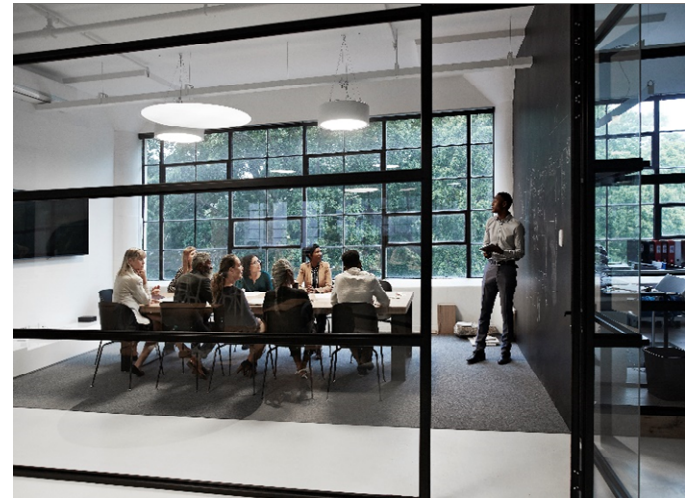
Issue Final Report

Study Area



Study Advisory Committee

- John Burt, Groton Town Manager
- Danielle Chesebrough, Stonington First Selectwoman
- Susan Cullen, Stonington Economic & Community Development Director
- Paige Bronk, Groton Economic & Community Development Manager
- Jonathan Reiner, Groton Planning & Development Services Director
- Bob O'Shaughnessy, Stonington Police Commission
- L.J. Fusaro, Groton Police Chief
- Deb Jones, Groton Asst. Director of Planning
- Greg Hanover, Groton Public Works Director
- Amanda Arling, Whalers Inn
- Bill Furgueson, Downtown Mystic Merchants
- Susan Fisher, Mystic Museum of Art
- Paul Sartor, Stonington Resident
- Todd Brady, Groton Business Owner/Resident
- Bruce Flax, Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce



Key Stakeholder Input

- 1. Groton Downtown Resident/Planning Zoning Commission
- 2. Groton Downtown Business Owner
- 3. Groton Business Owner/Resident
- 4. Groton Developer/Business Employee
- 5. Groton Downtown Resident
- 6. Stonington Downtown Resident/Mystic Park Commission
- 7. Stonington Resident/Former Downtown Resident
- 8. Stonington Downtown Business Owner
- 9. Stonington Resident/Planning Commission
- 10. Stonington Developer/Business Employee
- 11. Stonington Police Chief
- 12. Groton Police Chief
- 13. Mystic Museum of Art
- 14. Mystic Seaport Museum
- 15. Southeast Area Transit District (SEAT)

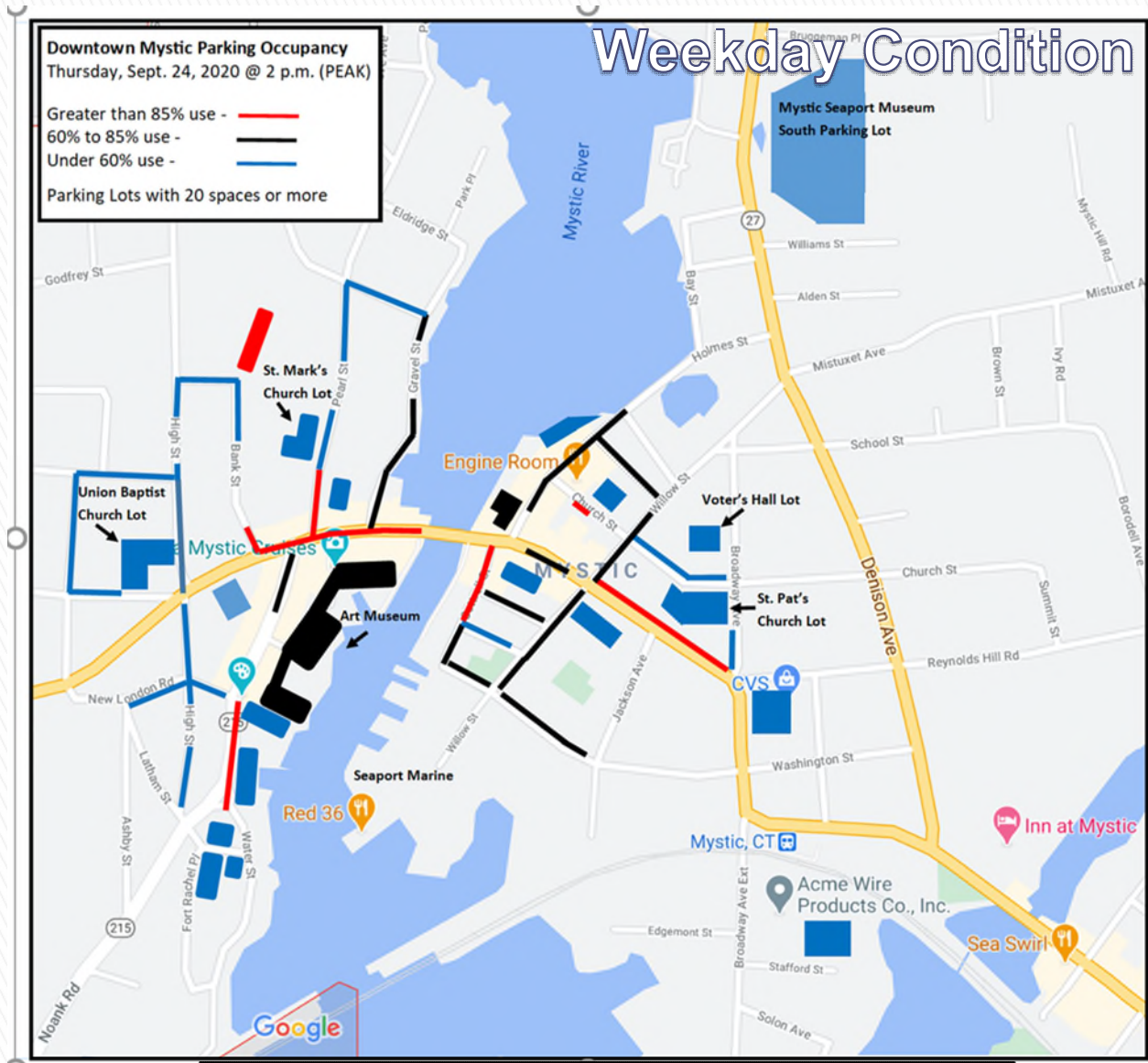


Existing Conditions – Parking Utilization

- Conducted parking occupancy counts from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on:
 - Saturday, September 19, 2020
 - Thursday, September 24, 2020
- Conducted “spot” parking occupancy counts, and a limited on-street license plate survey between 12 noon and 4 p.m. on:
 - Thursday, November 5, 2020
 - Saturday, November 7, 2020

to assess the seasonality of demand, parking turnover, and compliance with 2-hour time limits.

- Classification of parking facility utilization rates:
 - Functional Capacity – **greater than 85% use**
 - Acceptable use – **60% to 85% use**
 - Underutilized – **less than 60%**

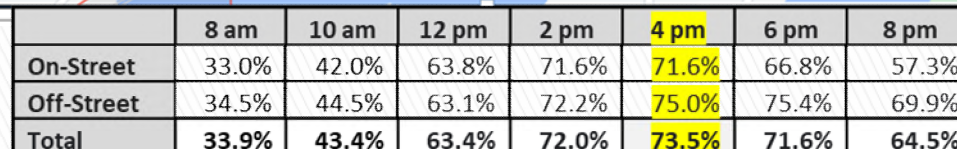


	8 am	10 am	12 pm	2 pm	4 pm	6 pm	8 pm
On-Street	23.5%	37.8%	49.2%	53.0%	52.3%	47.8%	44.2%
Off-Street	31.9%	39.2%	47.2%	49.3%	49.2%	51.5%	43.6%
Total	28.3%	38.6%	48.1%	50.9%	50.5%	49.9%	43.9%

Downtown Mystic Parking Occupancy
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020 @ 4 p.m. (PEAK)

Greater than 85% use - —
60% to 85% use - —
Under 60% use - —

Parking Lots with 20 spaces or more

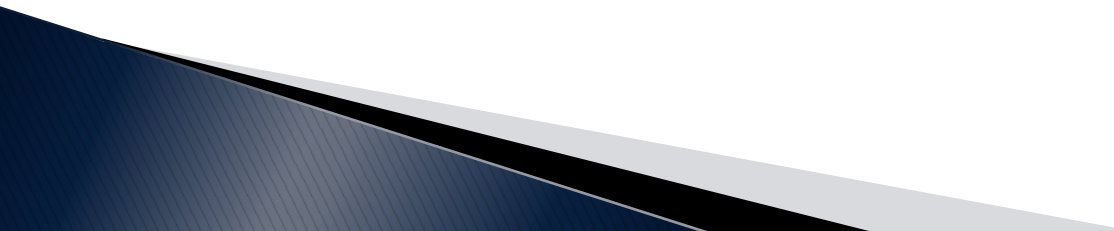


2-Hour Time Zone Parking Compliance Survey, Saturday, November 7, 2020

Street	From/To	2 Hr. Spaces Counted	Parked in Excess of 2-Hr. Limit	% Spaces in Violation (avg.)	# Parked in Excess of 4 hrs.	% of Spaces Parked 4 hrs.+
Water St.	Art Museum Lot to W. Main St.	4	1	25.0%	1	25.0%
Bank St.	Next to Mystic Pizza	2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
W. Main St.	Bank St. to Drawbridge	24	5	20.8%	3	12.5%
Cottrell St.	E. Main St. to Washington St.	45	12	26.7%	7	15.5%
Washington St.	Cottrell St. to Willow St.	5	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
E. Main St.	Willow St. to Holmes St.	5	1	20.0%	1	20.0%
Holmes St.	E. Main St. to Forsythe St.	17	5	29.4%	3	17.6%
TOTAL		102	24	23.5%	15	14.7%

- 1 in about 4 vehicles in the 2-hour zone parked in excess of 2 hours.
- 1 in about 7 vehicles in the 2-hour zone parked in excess of 4 hours.

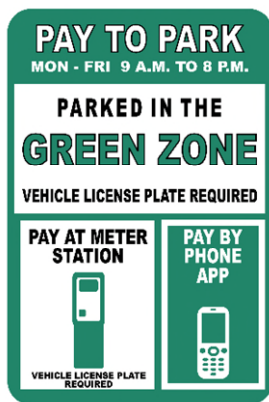
Summary of Recommended Improvements

- ❖ Expand & meter the 2-hour parking zone (year-round)
 - ❖ Expand off-street parking
 - ❖ Implement employee permit parking
 - ❖ Implement valet parking to remote parking areas
 - ❖ Implement seasonal parking shuttle from remote parking areas
 - ❖ Protect residential neighborhoods from parking spillover
 - ❖ Expand Community Service Officer (CSO) presence downtown
 - ❖ Reinvest parking revenues into the Downtown
- 

Recommendations

❖ **Expand & meter the 2-hour parking zone (year-round) to:**

- increase parking availability, turnover & time zone compliance;
- move employees out of the most convenient customer spaces;
- increase the number of customer/short-term visitor spaces;
- reduce the cost of time-zone parking enforcement;
- balance on-street and off-street parking pricing; and
- generate a revenue source to expand off-street parking, transit and reinvestment in the downtown.



Recommendations

Modest Expansion of the 2-Hour Parking Zone



- Pearl Street
- Gravel Street
- East Main Street

Recommendations

❖ Expand seasonal parking enforcement to year-round

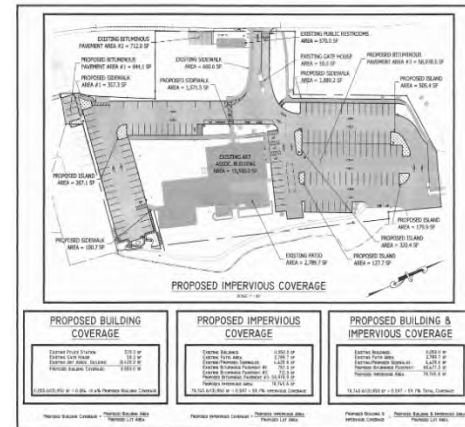


- Coordinate Community Service Officers (CSOs) on both sides of the bridge
- Emphasis is not issuing tickets! CSOs are “Parking Ambassadors” providing customer assistance/info, delivery truck mgt., special event parking mgt., etc.
- Replace manual handwritten tickets & chalking with electronic, wireless, contactless enforcement devices.

Recommendations

❖ **Expand off-street public parking**

- Reconfigure, automate & expand the Art Museum Parking Lot
+/- 35 new parking spaces
- 
- The diagram is a site plan of the Art Museum Parking Lot. It shows the layout of the parking area with various zones and structures. Labels include 'EXISTING ART MUSEUM PARKING AREA - 100 SPACES' and 'EXISTING PUBLIC RESTROOMS AREA - 100 SPACES'. The plan also shows the 'ART MUSEUM BUILDING' and 'ART MUSEUM GALLERY'.



- Reconfigure, repave & expand the 4th District Voting Hall Lot
 +/- 23 new parking spaces



Recommendations

❖ Expand off-street public parking



Church Lots



Marina Lots



Business Office Lots
(vacant on weekends)

- Seek to secure shared-lot parking agreements within 5 & 10-min. walk zone
- Seek to lease/purchase private parcels/lots within 5 & 10-min. walk zone

Recommendations

- ❖ **Implement Employee Permit Parking** in locations that are within a 3 to 5-minute walk of downtown for:
 - employees currently parking in the 2-hr zone & on residential streets;
 - increasing parking turnover in the 2-hour zone; and
 - reducing the waiting list for monthly parking at the Art Museum Lot.

Employee permits would be deeply discounted and priced lower than the monthly pass at the centrally-located Art Museum Lot.

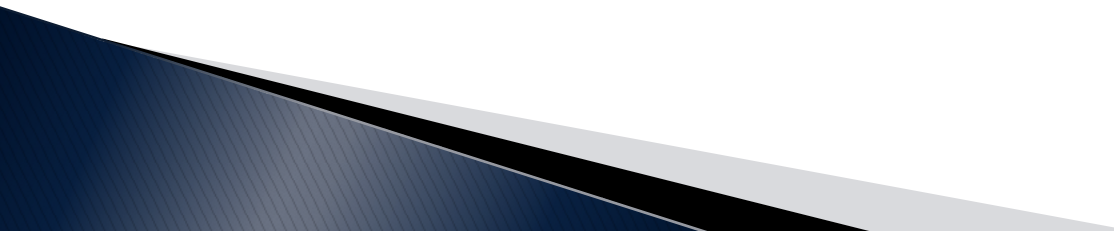
Recommendations

Employee Permit Parking Locations in Groton

Existing Locations

- Museum of Art Lot (\$45.67) – monthly permits currently sold out

Proposed Expanded Locations – (Deeply-discounted seasonal or annual permit)

- St. Mark's Episcopal Church Lot, Pearl Street
 - Union Baptist Church, High Street
 - High Street
 - Library Street
- 

Recommendations

- ❖ **Establish a Valet Parking Program** using vacant parking lots located outside of the 5-minute walk zone to:
 - free-up parking within the 5-minute walk zone – particularly on busy weekend days/evenings;
 - achieve a 50% increase in the number of vehicles parked in the valet lots through tandem parking.
 - increase customer service with front door-to-door service.

Towns would license, regulate, & promote Valet Program



Recommendations

❖ **Protect residential neighborhoods from excessive downtown parking infiltration/spillover**



Each of the previous recommendations will reduce customer infiltration onto residentially-zoned streets. However, towns should monitor the residential streets to consider further regulatory action should it be needed, particularly on residential streets that:

- are located between the commercial district and employee permit lots;
- have a lot of multi-family housing and/or lack of driveways; and
- consistently exceed 85% occupancy over multiple hours of the day/week

Recommendations

❖ **Consider Implementing strategies to address peak summer and special event parking demand**

- Expand Valet Parking Program
- Expand peripheral, free off-street parking within a 10-min. (+/-) walk of downtown with improved pedestrian wayfinding signage & lighting
- Implement a Parking Guidance System (PGS) with real-time, dynamic messaging to direct drivers to available peripheral lots when the Art Museum Lot is full/closed.
- Implement a shuttle bus system to efficiently link remote parking lots, hotels, and attractions with the Mystic Train Station between I-95 and Downtown Mystic.



QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION