

Parking



Views of on-street parking on Main Street



Views of off-street parking in back lots and alleys

Almost any downtown that has faced challenges economically, as well as those that have gone through the revitalization process, have dealt with the realities and perceptions about parking. Parking is usually a pressure point where business expectations are about the link between parking and business success. Poultney is no stranger to the parking issue. One of Poultney's assets is a great supply of on-street parking in the form of diagonal spaces on the south side and parallel spaces on the north side of Main Street. There are some 148 spaces on both sides of the length of Main Street in the business district, intermittently interrupted by driveways.

The initial response to the parking issue by the design team was that parking appeared to be adequate. However, businesses and residents disagreed, and the tenacity of the steering committee prevailed. A committee member conducted detailed interviews with business and apartment building owners. The results of that outreach indicated several revelations:

1. There were twice the number of apartment units as town records in the Grand List indicated – thus driving the parking requirement for residents up by almost 200%, and
2. A much more detailed assessment of the number of employees of downtown businesses was defined, such that employee parking was much more clearly understood. This also illuminated several businesses that have no employee parking, thus requiring staff to use on-street parking spaces that should be for customer use.

The following table based upon the survey done by Gail Vreeland, and the revised data from the land use indicates the best estimate of business and residential uses that demand parking spaces: See Appendix for the entire survey report.

Landuse or units	Square footage	Reqd.	Spaces typ. on – street	Total spaces off - street	Total spaces
Commercial storefronts:	51,946 SF		1 space/350 – 500 SF	150 –180	NA

This landuse requires on - street parking almost exclusively, and there appears to be a deficit of some 30 spaces.

Staff parking needs:			undefined	0	125 – 140
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This landuse typically requires off - street parking, but only 110 of these spaces are accommodated in existing off - street spaces. At least 35 spaces need to be created.

Rental apartments and Multi family buildings:	103		1 – 2 per unit	0	103 - 206
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This landuse landuse typically requires off - street parking and the vast majority of these spaces are accommodated in existing street spaces, with the exceptions of the blocks near the center area of Main Street.

Single family residences:	10+		1 – 2 per unit	0	10 – 20
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This landuse requires off - street parking and the vast majority of these spaces are accommodated in existing off street spaces.

Total estimated spaces on Main Street 148

Total estimated spaces on back lots *Approximately 200 (The actual number is difficult to measure because they are usually gravel lots with undefined parking spaces)*

Total estimated parking demand: **0 – 30** spaces for on – street deficit.

As many as 238 – 366 spaces are needed in off– street locations, some of which already have spaces created.

If one assumes that there are at least 200 spaces currently in existence, then the deficit could be some 38 – 166 spaces for off street locations. The high number is probably excessive because there are redundancies, or staggered/ high volume demand, in the estimates that should be factored - in.

Recommendations for parking management:

- On – street parking spaces should be reserved for storefronts.
- Off - street spaces should be maximized for staff/employees uses.
- Off - street spaces need to be improved for access, safety and attraction, and better organized to be an available resource.
- At least 35 spaces need to be created in the area between Depot Street and Maple Street to meet an on - street deficit, more are needed for off street uses.

Businesses defined by the parking survey as having a parking deficit include:

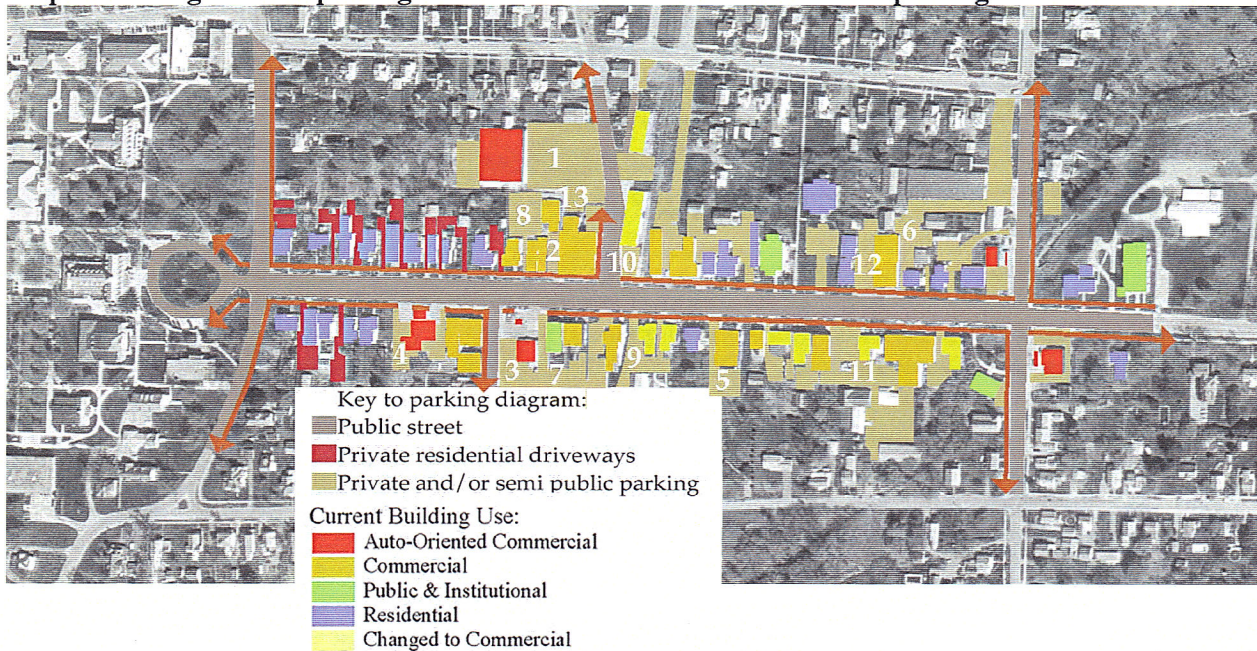
- Tots
- Williams Hardware:
- Marts
- Bargain Barn
- Northland
- Post Office
- Village Styles
- K&K
- VT Store

- K-P
- Library
- Antiques
- Perry's
- Pizza
- Preseau's
- F&F/GW/VT Slate

In the public workshops, there were suggestions to consider making the parking on the north side of Main Street diagonal as well as the current south side, or to alternate diagonal parking with parallel parking on opposite sides. However, because of the perceived safety issues associated with angle parking, a few residents advocated for parallel parking only. This would entail a loss of some 50 spaces.

Better planning for traffic circulation through those areas and some striping of parking spaces could increase efficient use of the spaces available, thus allowing room for many additional parking spaces. The owners of small private parking lots need to make those areas more accessible to use by signing those lots with the little **P** symbol on downtown signs.

Map of existing back lot parking areas where both formal and informal parking areas exist:



1. Shaws Supermarket
2. Cash Market
3. behind Stewarts
4. behind the Exxon
5. behind the Post Office.
6. side of Williams Machine
7. behind the bank/library
8. behind Preseau's and Debonis and Wright
9. between Original Vt Store and Brass Butterfly,
10. Kay's Corner
11. between Williams Hardware and Mart's Sporting Goods
12. west side of Fair Haven Poultney Auto
13. behind Loomis Paint, Flowers, Drakes Pharmacy and Journal Press