

ELM STREET
ILLEGAL
PARKING
DISCUSSION

TRAFFIC COMMISSION

MARCH 21, 2024



PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION

- Discuss the current parking regulations on Elm Street between Day Street and Grove Street.
- Describe specific issues regarding frequent illegal parking on the street.
- Discuss initial data collection efforts.
- Preview potential short-term future options to improve safety along the street and gather feedback.




ELM STREET PARKING REGULATIONS

Elm Street from Day Street to Grove Street




 Metered parking

 Loading Zone

 Loading Zone (7am - 5pm) Taxi Stand 5pm - 2am

 Rideshare pick-up and drop off

 Bus Stop

 Accessible Parking

 30-minute parking

CHALLENGES WITH CURRENT PARKING REGULATIONS

- There is not a loading zone that is long enough to accommodate large trucks.
- The 30-minute spots do not encourage frequent turn-over and are hard to enforce.
- The dedicated rideshare pick-up and drop-off spot is no longer in use by rideshare apps.
- There is only 1 accessible space, and it is not near a curb-cut.
- The time-limited loading zone does not account for loading needs after 5 p.m. where there is still high demand.
- The taxi stand is no longer in operation.

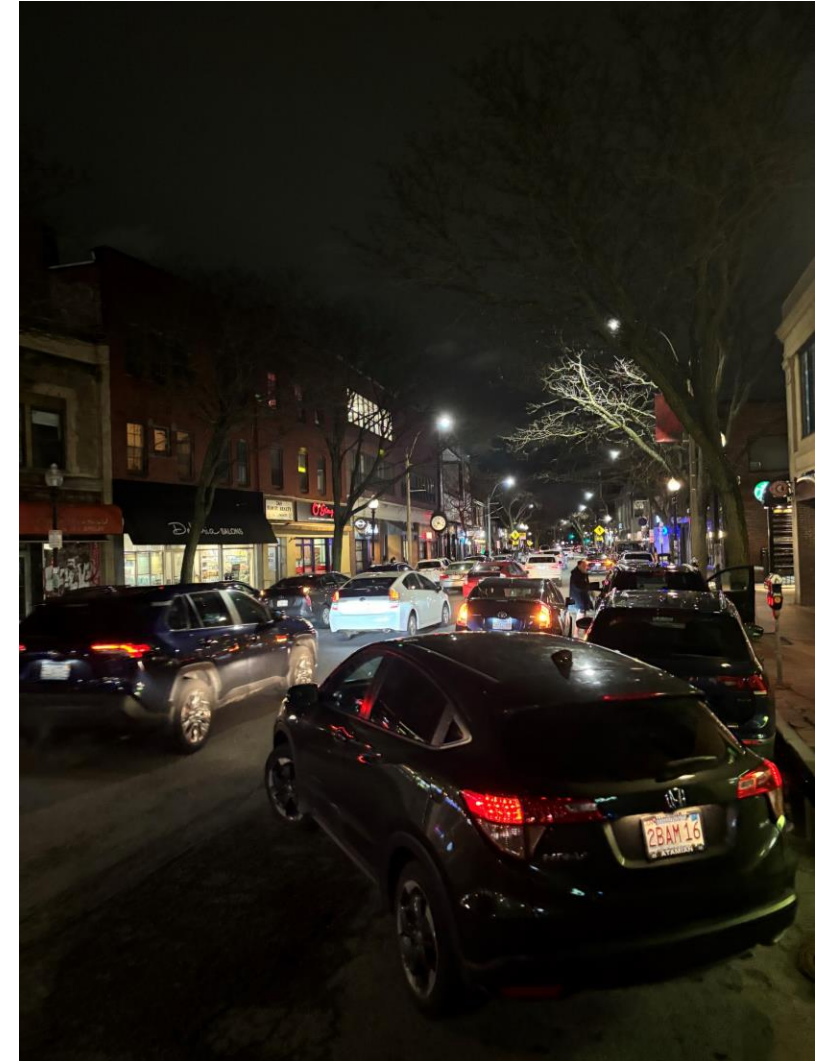


Food delivery semi truck blocking crosswalk. Passenger van double parked in front of parklet.



ILLEGAL PARKING ISSUES

- The demand food pick up and delivery has greatly increased since the start of the COVID 19 pandemic.
- Double parking, parking on crosswalks, parking in the bus stop, and illegal parking in the accessible spot continues to be an issue throughout the day and not just at peak times.
- The illegal parking on crosswalks blocks crossings for people walking and wheeling, creating accessibility issues for people using mobility devices or strollers.
- The double parking can block service for the 6 bus routes that travel the street (87, 88, 89, 90, 94, 96).
- Illegal parking can also impact emergency services' travel times.
 - This is particularly more challenging with passenger food delivery vehicles because drivers leave the vehicle unlike in rideshare where they may be able to quickly move the vehicle.



Double parked cars on both sides of Elm Street between Day Street and Chester Street resulting in five cars across the width of Elm Street.

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL PARKING



Truck double parking blocking travel lane. This photo was taken from a bus where the bus couldn't easily travel by the truck, causing route delay.



Truck parking both on top of a crosswalk and in a no standing anytime location. The curb is extended here to give priority and greater visibility for people crossing. Another box truck parked behind blocking other crosswalk.



Double parked passenger vehicle.

ILLEGAL PARKING DATA SOURCE 1: TICKETED VIOLATIONS

Violations only include what Parking Control Officers were able to ticket for.

Year	Double Parked	Bus Stops	Meter violations	Total
2022	295	30	1,208	1,533
2023	397	27	2,237	2,661
2024 (to date)	47	6	538	591



ILLEGAL PARKING DATA SOURCE 2: PILOT AUTOMATED SYSTEM (SAFETY STICK)

- From July 1 to August 10, 2023, the Parking Department conducted a pilot using a safety stick. The safety stick is able to capture with photos illegal parking incidents.
- Safety sticks were placed in front of the Burren at the crosswalks and in the bus stop at Chester Street.
- Most (329, 78%) illegal parking incidents (where a vehicle parked on the crosswalk or in the bus stop) were between 90 secs and 10 minutes.

Time	Sessions	%
90 Sec	177	42%
3-10 min	152	36%
11-19 min	46	11%
>20 min	45	11%
Longest	1:08	
Total	420	

ILLEGAL PARKING DATA SOURCE 3: VIDEO OBSERVATIONS

- Mobility and Parking conducted a video data collection effort capturing footage from two locations for 24 hours a day from February 29 to March 2.
- We are currently still processing data collection but found that there is an incredibly large amount of quick pick up on Elm Street both between Day Street and Chester Street and Chester Street and Grove Street.
- Even at times when there was open curb space across the street, many vehicles chose to double park on the side of the street where they were picking up.



Three vehicles double parking on southside of the street with open curb space on the northside. One vehicle is parked on the crosswalk.

ILLEGAL PARKING DATA SOURCE 4: 311 SERVICE REQUESTS

The double parking on Elm Street between Davis Square and Grove Street is out of control and backing traffic up beyond the Davis square traffic signal. There were at least half a dozen maybe more cars double parked on both sides in this short stretch. It's dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

I often see large tractor trailers attempting to park in Davis Square on Elm St near Chester St during the morning & evening rush hours. To put it bluntly, they don't fit. They block the street. They block the crosswalks. They create serious danger of injury or death for vulnerable road users.

People are double parking in front of Diesel Cafe and in front of the Foundry. At the same time cars are parked on the other side of the street. Gentleman reports that buses do not have enough room to go by (but try to) and someone is going to get hurt. Gentleman suggests that a sign saying "Please Do Not Double Park" should be placed at the restaurants outdoor dining fence. another accident happened today.



OUTDOOR DINING PARKLETS IMPACT CURB ACCESS

- Outdoor dining is a new and important use for the business community
- Some of the outdoor dining locations directly conflict with currently loading zones
- Some businesses that have outdoor dining also have high demand for take out, which impacts curb demand.
- It is critical to explore safety solutions that also accommodate outdoor dining impacts.
- **Foundry:** Approximately 30 feet - Loading Zone
- **Elm Street Taproom:** Approximately 46 feet - 2 meters and part of Time Limited Loading Zone
- **Anna's Taqueria:** 40 feet - 2 meters



POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR THE NEAR FUTURE

- Pilot additional loading zones on Elm Street to provide more curb access for commercial loading, quick food pick up, and rideshare pick up and drop off.
 - Use new City Loading Zone signage with the aim of better communicating the multiple uses for this type of parking space.
- Propose moving the accessible spot closer to the curb ramps at Grove Street and install another on the other side of the street.
- Conduct a targeted educational campaign along the street hanging posters about the pilot loading zones, talking with businesses, and asking businesses to hang informational fliers to share with people doing food pickup.
- Operationalize safety sticks.
- Explore quick-build installations to prevent people from parking on crosswalks and pavement markings to indicate one-lane of travel. The current width of the street can make people feel that it is two-lanes or easy to double park.
- Conduct data collection following implementation of any improvements. Data collection will take place during and after parklet season, which runs from April to November.
- Follow up with Traffic Commission with permanent regulation proposals following data collection.



Image: New City Loading Zone signs



DISCUSSION