Over-Parking of Silicon Valley TODs – Transit Agency Perspective

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Putting Parking In Its Place for Smart Growth

New Partners for Smart Growth conference
February 2, 2012
The Challenge

- The Silicon Valley/Santa Clara County area has a fairly well-developed transit system, but relatively few supportive land uses.
- Transit improvements and new development are on the way (incl. BART to San Jose).
- Parking requirements often get in the way of increasing density or improving urban form.
The Approach

- Partnership between a university (San José State) and a transit agency (VTA).
- Leverage student efforts, in-kind efforts from SJSU and VTA team members.
Principal Investigators

- **Eduardo Serafin, PE, AICP**, Adjunct Lecturer, SJSU; Tech. Program Manager, UC Berkeley ITS
- **Justin Meek, AICP**, Graduate Research Assistant, SJSU; Senior Planner, City of Marina
- **Robert Swierk, AICP**, Senior Transportation Planner, VTA
- **Ying Smith, AICP**, Transportation Planning Manager, VTA

Research Team

- Students of SJSU Urban & Regional Planning 256, Spring 2010
Project Objectives

- Survey parking utilization at TOD residential projects
- Corroborate findings of other research on the topic (e.g., Cervero, Adkins and Sullivan 2009)
- Provide *local* evidence that reduced parking standards may be permissible
- Provide relevant information for similar projects throughout the U.S.
Survey Methodology

- 12 survey sites in Santa Clara County, near Caltrain or VTA light rail stations
- Conducted mid-week (Tuesday – Thursday), peak period (between 12 and 4 a.m.)
- **Key site criteria**: residential, within ½ mile of rail station, surface or podium parking (no townhomes/private garages)
Key Findings

- Parking Utilization
  - 2,496 out of 9,751 spaces were unused (26%)
  - Utilization ranged from 61% to 83%
  - 1.7 spaces per dwelling unit provided, 1.3 spaces per dwelling unit used

- Demand rates near the bottom or below municipal requirements

- Suggests that TOD residential properties near rail stations in Santa Clara County are “over-parked”
## Parking Demand for Surveyed Sites Compared to Local Zoning Requirements

(Utilized Parking Spaces/Occupied Housing Units)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Parking Utilization Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site #1</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site #2</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site #20</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site #21</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Range of Local Parking Requirements

0.00 - 3.00
Parking Utilization Rates for Surveyed Sites
Utilized Parking Spaces/Total Parking Supply (%)
Policy Implications

- Reduce costs of unused parking
- Simplify local parking requirements
- Future transit expansion
- Better land use and urban form
Next Steps – How Can a Transit Agency Influence Development?

- **Further analysis:**
  - Residential user surveys – rates for different unit sizes/types, auto ownership, mode choice
  - Surveys of other land uses – e.g., office

- **Outreach:** to local agency staff, Planning Commissions, Councils

- **Transportation impact analysis** of projects

- Parking in **Joint Development** projects
More Information

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- Summary article and full report available at
  www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/communityplanning