

1.963, A Sustainable Transportation Plan for MIT
John Attanucci, Larry Brutti
Session 5: Current Status of MIT Parking

MIT already has a low rate of single occupancy vehicle (SOV) parking. Are we at the stage where marginal cost per SOV reduced increases significantly?

- 2004 single occupancy vehicle rate was 25%

Leased spaces are often part of the package with leased office space, but they are counted in MIT's parking inventory.

We are increasing leased spaces significantly each year.

For example, in the Broad Institute building, we were required to take the parking spaces.

At Tech Square, we don't use all the parking that we could take under the lease.

Employees currently pay about 25% of parking costs; goal is to increase to 35%.

Principle of equity: everyone is within a 10-minute walk of their location, and many people are within 5 minutes

If people are outside the 10-minute radius, then we'd have to think about shuttle costs.

Equity is the guiding principle here.

We allocate space to the departments, who then allocate individual spaces to employees.

Department of Facilities – many employees are unionized, so all the parking needs to be in the same place (conditions of union contract).

At Harvard, the more distant lots are cheaper.

Where the Sidney and Pacific dorm is now (grad student dorm in the northwest part of campus) used to be a deeply discounted lot, but it was hard to get people to park there.

Comment: well, this is because parking here is relatively plentiful and cheap.

For the Stata Center, we were permitted to build 1500 spaces, but ended up building around 670. We also tore down the adjacent parking structure.

Problem Definition: when the new Sloan building and Cancer Research Center are built, we will permanently lose 300-400 spaces in the east campus area.

A lot of people remember when parking was free, so it's hard to convince them of more parking increases.

Benefits come out of the Employee Benefit pool – as healthcare costs increase, that makes it harder to increase parking costs (these are costs to MIT).

Discussion of various options to increase campus parking spaces.

There is pressure to come up with cheap options.

There are issues associated with building garages if you don't know what will be on top. What part of costs are joint between parking and the building?

There is also a space opportunity costs – the city of Cambridge prefers underground parking.

Do these costs include changes to the streetscape?

The city really liked the idea of a garage at the Medical lot (in the east campus).

What about using underground space for labs, etc.?

In some places the water table is 6 feet below ground, so we try to avoid this. So using underground space to park cars is not taking away space from anything else.

What is considered the useful life of a parking structure? Generally 30-40 years, but we don't have much experience yet with underground garages.

Any ideas about future policy to absorb all the new employees?

- Alternative modes?
- Completely subsidized T-pass may be cheaper for MIT overall
- Percentage of people who will shift modes is low, in response to price changes.
- See how much mode shift we can induce.

One idea: a package where everyone gets a free Universal Pass, and parking rates are increased.