

Improving the Downtown Parking Experience



Background

Dedham, Massachusetts is a charming and historic town located about 21 miles southwest of Boston. The town features beautiful brick sidewalks, historic architecture and was settled in 1635.

Downtown Dedham, known as Dedham Square, features a thriving small business community along with a historic movie theater, coffee houses, restaurants and bookstores that draw both area residents and tourists to the community.

To help regulate parking, the town invested in single space mechanical parking meters nearly two decades ago and more recently added multi-space parking kiosks in order to generate city revenues and ensure parking compliance.



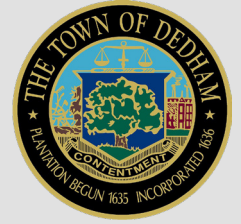
Because of Dedham's history, charm and unique location within the State of Massachusetts, there's a high demand for parking spaces near its downtown Square and along the City's outskirts where its district courts are located and the community conducts events, such as its highly popular weekly farmers market.

Over the last three years, the parking meters and kiosks Dedham purchased and managed began to fail operationally. Being a community with a small operating budget, Dedham had one parking enforcement officer who had multiple duties beyond parking enforcement.

Maintaining Dedham's patchwork of legacy parking meters and payment kiosks, as it aged over time, was equally challenging.

Because Dedham's parking meters were decades old, it made sourcing replacement parts and finding skilled technicians who could service the parking kiosks another barrier to maintaining the system.

Unfortunately for Dedham, purchasing new equipment and securing the warranties necessary to keep a new parking system operational – which represented potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars – was not a realistic option for city leaders.



ORGANIZATION

Dedham Square

KEY CHALLENGES

Parking payment collection devices were failing daily in the increasingly busy area of Dedham Square.

KEY BENEFIT

The Municipal Parking Service system allows for easy payment and has increased monthly parking revenues per space by \$171 and increased parking compliance by 20%.



I'm proud that we made parking easier to pay in Dedham. I'm also glad that our enforcement improved. We installed the first meter that forgives and forgets. No kidding, if you don't pay the meter or pay less than you should on the meter, the MPS solution actually let's parkers swipe their ticket away even two hours later."

**- John Sission,
Dedham EDD**

Why Change?

Parking Problems on Dedham Square

“In the last several years it became more apparent that parking was a community problem because residents and visitors were unable to visit Dedham Square conveniently,” says John Sisson, Dedham EDD. “Demand was growing for parking spaces because of the town’s attractions along the City’s Square, but our parking equipment for collecting payments was failing nearly every day and we simply couldn’t keep the system fully operational.”

Parking Compliance

Dedham’s ability to enforce parking was also challenged because the City had just one town employee responsible for parking enforcement. This person was also working as a part-time police officer and animal control officer, in addition to being the only parking enforcement officer.

Merchant Complaints

“City merchants were complaining about people parking in front of their establishments and not moving for hours. At the same time city leaders wanted to budget for, and recruit, another full-time enforcement officer but our parking and enforcement revenues didn’t justify the investment,” says Sisson. “We had to make changes not only with our equipment but also to how we managed enforcement. We looked for an easier-to-use solution and we needed enforcement that would work without adding additional staff.”



USER CONVENIENCE FEES:

- Eliminates the risk of parking violations
- Provides turn-by-turn directions to open spaces

THE MPS SOLUTION FEATURES:

- No capital costs for equipment
- Zero maintenance or warranty costs
- Enhanced parking and violation data
- Parking violation fulfillment services



Since many of our parking meters were nonoperational for extended periods of time, some people paid for parking while those who parked in spaces where the meter didn't work parked for free.

It was an unfair system that hurt city revenues while serving to frustrate our business community and residents alike. We needed to deliver a better, more cost-effective and fair solution for our community.”

- John Sission,
Dedham’s Economic Development Director

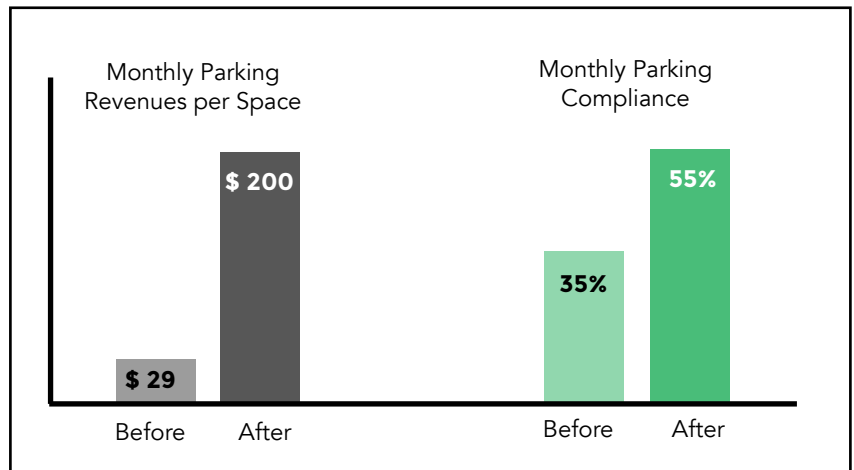
The Solution

“As I was preparing a budget request for new parking equipment, I received a call from a company I’d never heard of, MPS,” says Sisson. “They offered Dedham parking equipment, a mobile payment application and service that would vastly improve parking enforcement at no cost up front. In fact, it basically came at zero cost to my department. MPS offered Dedham a free pilot of their system as a proof of concept which produced data we couldn’t imagine having before they arrived. The MPS data gave us occupancy, payment compliance and missed parking violations data. The pilot MPS conducted illustrated that only about 35% of parkers were paying for parking and most of those who didn’t pay, never received a parking ticket.”



The Outcome

Today the town of Dedham still has high demand for parking but now its easier with the MPS solution. The MPS meters accept coins, credit cards and an “EZ pass” like feature called Concierge that makes paying for parking as easy as going through a toll booth.



FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- 4X** INCREASE IN GROSS REVENUE
- +20%** PAYMENT COMPLIANCE IMPROVEMENT
- +3000%** SUPERIOR ENFORCEMENT EFFICIENCY (IN DEC 20)
- 4:1** VENDOR CONSOLIDATION
- 99%+** REDUCTION IN MAINTENANCE BREAK-FIX EXPENSE
- 99.99%** SYSTEM UPTIME