

## **Cumberland Avenue Merchant Survey Summary**

In an effort to collect information on parking needs in the Cumberland Avenue study area, MPC distributed a survey in November 2007 to approximately 55 businesses. The survey asked questions regarding the nature of the business, who the business served, and questions specific to parking.<sup>1</sup> The survey had no statistical safeguards such as sampling errors and confidence levels but the data it contains should provide valuable information to the business community and policymakers.

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Of the 55 businesses surveyed, 38 responded for a response rate of 69 percent. The average tenure of business surveyed within the study area is 20 years. Below is a summary of additional survey results.

The types of businesses responding were as follows:

- Restaurant/bar – 37%
- Service – 29%
- Retail – 24%
- Financial – 8%
- Other – 8%

Customers typically arrive at businesses in the Cumberland Avenue district as follows:

- Personal vehicle – 58%
- On foot – 38%
- Bus/trolley – 4%

Survey respondents indicated that their businesses serve the following customers:

- UT students – 37%
- Area residents (other than UT students) – 27%
- Employees from area businesses – 22%
- Tourists – 8%
- Other – 6%

Destinations most frequently mentioned as driving customer's to Cumberland Avenue include:

- Area restaurants
- UT campus and UT athletic games
- Ft. Sanders Regional Medical Center and East Tennessee Children's hospital

### **Parking**

With a few exceptions, survey respondents have limited off-street parking for customers and their employees. It is estimated that there are approximately 780 off-street parking spaces available for the 38 businesses responding.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that answers to survey questions are based solely on merchant and property owner perceptions.

Of the 38 respondents, 41 percent of them currently have some type of shared parking arrangement. Of those respondents that answered the question of whether or not they would support a shared parking arrangement along Cumberland Avenue, 80 percent indicated that they would support such a policy.<sup>2</sup>

Thirty-three (33) survey respondents answered the question of how many parking violators are towed from their parking lot on a monthly basis. Based on their estimates a total of approximately 55 violators are towed per month. UT students were identified as the most frequent violators. However, comments gathered in the survey and from talking to Cumberland Avenue merchants indicate that many merchants do not tow parking violators because they believe it has a negative impact on business.

On average it costs \$1,900 per year for respondents to maintain their off-street parking lots.

### **Deliveries**

In general, respondents did not indicate that deliveries created a significant issue for their business. A few of the specific issues identified were as follows:

- Loading area frequently occupied by UT students.
- A lack of a designated loading zone creates a traffic issue.
- Alleys are not sufficiently utilized for deliveries.
- Delivery schedules conflict with adjacent businesses delivery schedules.
- There is not place for drivers to park or turn around (on Lake Avenue).

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<sup>2</sup> 58 percent of respondents responded to the question regarding whether or not they have a shared parking arrangement.