

Review of Traffic Accidents in Downtown Nantucket

Traffic accident statistics were obtained from the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) for the period from January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2005. During this three-year period, 75 accidents occurred in downtown Nantucket. The locations of accidents are given in Figure 5.

Based upon a review of the available accident data for the years 2003 to 2005, most of the accidents involved property damage only, with only one resulting in an injury. The most common types of accidents were side swipes and angle collisions. The majority of accidents took place during the day in fair weather on dry pavement. Further examination of the statistics resulted in the following observations:

1. The only injury reported was in an angle collision at the intersection of Broad and South Beach Streets. This accident took place during rainy weather. No other specific contributing factors were identified.
2. Three accidents involved collisions with bicycles. These took place at the intersections of Washington and Francis Streets, Washington and Candle Streets, and North Beach Street and Whalers Lane.
3. One accident involved a collision with a pedestrian. This took place on Broad Street, the specific location not identified. This accident took place at night with Broad Street illuminated. Records indicate that the pedestrian was not injured, but the vehicle suffered property damage.
4. Twenty-three accidents (31 percent of the total) were reported as collisions where at least one of the vehicles was parked, attempting to park, or attempting to exit a parking space. The locations with greatest numbers of this type of accident were:

Main Street - 5
Federal Street - 5
Broad Street - 4
Center Street - 3
India Street - 3
Union Street - 3

Note: Accidents occurred in other places as well. These numbers total 23 because an event at a corner was counted for both streets.

5. Clusters of accidents were noted in several places:
- a. Intersection of Washington and Francis Streets
 - b. Intersection of Broad and Federal Streets
 - c. Intersection of Washington, Candle, and Salem Streets
 - d. Along India Street

The limited data allows only general inferences about these locations. Accidents at Washington and Francis Streets appear related to turning movements at the corner. Accidents in the Washington/Candle/Salem Streets area were not related to parking maneuvers, while many of those along India Street were. Accidents at the intersection of Broad and Federal Streets show no particular pattern.

In conclusion, accident experience downtown does not appear to be extensive or highly destructive. Review of the data suggests that when considering improvements attention might be given to parking locations and maneuvers, traffic signs and controls at key locations, and interactions between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Nearly half (36 out of 75; 48 percent) of the accidents occurred in the summer months of June, July, and August. Thus, accidents were three times as frequent per unit of time in the summer as the rest of the year.



Legend

Crash Locations

- Bicycle Involved
- Pedestrian Involved
- Single Vehicle Crash
- Parked Vehicle Involved
- Moving Vehicle Involved
- Unknown

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**Downtown Circulation and Ferry Access
Improvement Study**

LOCATION:
Nantucket, MA

MMI#: 2967-04
MXD: H:study_area.mxd
SOURCE: DEP Bulletin No.40



**2003-2005 Crash
Locations Map**

DATE:
October 2007
SCALE:
1:7,000

SHEET:
Figure 5

Existing Ferry User Survey and Analysis

In an attempt to better understand how the current ferry travelers, or users, travel to and from the ferry terminals, a person-to-person interview, or pedestrian survey, was conducted with passengers during both a typical peak season weekday and weekend scenario. This survey technique included both preset questions as well as conversational dialogue.

Sample preset questionnaire:

Please circle date: Wednesday, August 6th Thursday, August 8th Friday, August 10th Saturday, August 11th

Please circle terminal: SSA Nantucket SSA Hyannis Hy-Line Nantucket Hy-Line Hyannis

Nantucket Ferry User Survey

The Town of Nantucket is performing a study to improve the circulation of traffic (vehicular, truck, bicycle and pedestrian) to and from the ferry service terminals. Your input is vital to the study by allowing us to understand how you actually get to and from the terminal. Please take a moment to fill out the form below.

Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated!

	How many people are you traveling with (including yourself)?	How did you arrive at the ferry terminal today?								Are you vacationing on the island?	Are you commuting to/from work? If commuting, how many times per week do you ride the ferry?	Are you an island resident?
		I was dropped off by a friend/relative	I parked my car near the ferry.	I am taking my car on the ferry	I took a taxi.	I used a hotel/resort van.	I took the bus (NRTA shuttle).	I walked.	I am taking my bike on the ferry.			
EXAMPLE	2		X							NO	YES/3	YES
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NRTA - Nantucket Regional Transit Authority

2007-01-01/007-04

Summary of Comments and Suggestions From Ferry Passenger Surveys

The passenger ferry surveys yielded numerous comments and suggestions as well as basic data about travel patterns. The picture that emerges is a group familiar with Nantucket and the operations of its transportation system. They have evolved strategies to cope with the foibles of the system and work around them - from keeping cars only for use on the island, traveling at off-peak times, designated meeting and pickup locations, "secret" parking places, and others. Comments and suggestions show a diversity of perspectives, from complaints about serious congestion to indications that it is "not that bad." There is also a recognition that some problems occur only during peak times. The comments and suggestions can be summarized by general subject (with some overlap) as follows:

Ferry Access

1. Designate a pickup and drop-off area for general passengers, especially at the Hy-Line ferry. Designated areas presently exist for taxis, reserved vehicles, and hotel cars/vans but not for the general public. Passengers spoke of a "circle and wait" strategy when picking up arriving passengers.
2. Provide a centralized bus/taxi area for both ferries, perhaps at the midpoint between the two wharves.
3. NRTA service should get closer to the terminals and be well marked.
4. Access for handicapped persons needs to be improved.
5. Build another ferry pier away from downtown.

Traffic and Circulation

1. Recent one-way redirection "seems to be working."
2. Close Main Street to cars.
3. Need more taxis.

4. Police directing traffic at Broad Street "make the problem worse" - suggest simply merging by alternating is better.
5. Congestion delaying taxis approaching the ferry terminal results in "jump and run" in order to catch the ferry.
6. Contractors, truck drivers, and other people who do not know their way around often get lost and make congestion worse. This suggests more education, training, and information distribution.
7. Provide downtown trolley service.
8. Congestion is worse in bad weather.

Parking

1. More parking is needed downtown, preferably in a garage.
2. Provide satellite parking areas and shuttle service.

Policies

1. Limit the number of vehicles on the island. One passenger commented that the feasibility of this is linked to the amount and cost of parking on the mainland, suggesting that if parking at Hyannis were more abundant and cheaper, fewer people would bring their cars across.
2. Limit the size and number of "large sightseeing buses."
3. Limit the number of cars downtown during peak hours.
4. Ban "big SUVs" from downtown.

Wayfinding

1. People disembarking often do not know where to go. Several remarked that they just "followed the crowd." There should be more signs or information kiosks to direct people to landmarks, bicycle rentals, taxi stand, NRTA bus stops, etc.
2. Information about Nantucket and how to get around should be available on the ferries as people have time to read while traveling. Several travelers remarked that the plastic information holders on the ferry are often empty. One suggested that a "Welcome to Nantucket" video could be playing continuously.
3. Several people remarked about the lack of signs for bicycle routes and paths.

NRTA Bus Service

1. Buses should serve ferry terminals directly (several responses).
2. Provide shuttle service to satellite parking areas.
3. Increase frequency of service on the Sconset Route.
4. Extend service "all the way" along Cliff Road.
5. More frequent service and expanded coverage area.
6. System needs more publicity.
7. Put "Mass Transit Center" at current site of Pacific National.
8. Buses should be "better equipped to handle beachgoers."

Bicycle Facilities

1. Some folks were deterred from renting bikes by the difficulty in finding bike routes into town after reaching the in-town end of the bike paths. They did not feel comfortable.
2. Others felt that traffic congestion compromised safety for cyclists.
3. Extend and connect bike paths into a network.
4. Comment: "Expert or avid road bikers will avoid the bike trails because of the fear of crashing into a family of bikers with small children weaving all over the place."

Summary

Please see Figure 6.

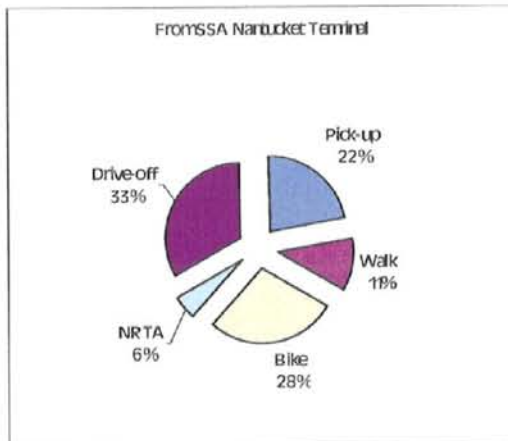
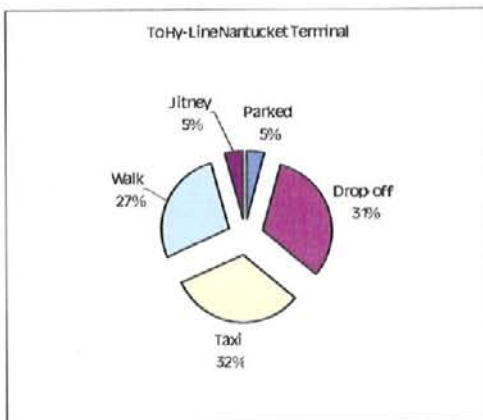
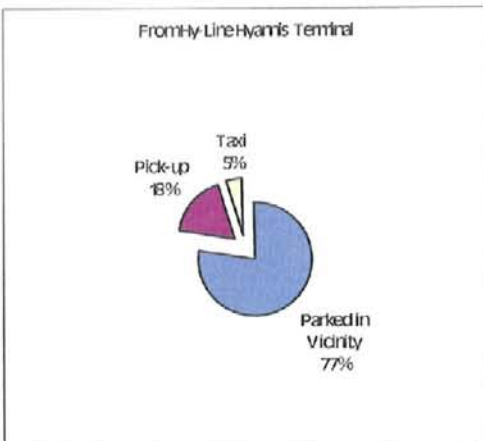
Like many surveys, this one has produced a variety of ideas and suggestions, some potentially practical, others less so, some contradicting others. Some reflect misunderstandings or not knowing about recent changes. There seem to be two common overall themes in particular:

1. Many ferry users have ultimate origins/destinations away from downtown (and little interest in stopping downtown on the way). Many suggestions relate to expediting these folks to their destinations without interacting with downtown traffic. This should be borne in mind.
2. Many comments relate to a lack of information, signs, and indications of where to go for what. This suggests that some serious attention to wayfinding would be useful.

The comments and suggestions from the survey as well as the data on travel patterns will be utilized in the next stage of the study when alternative improvement schemes are developed.

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Figure 6
Summary of Ferry Survey Data



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