

Main Street Loading Zones, Where are you going to put them?

Every city and town with main street merchants, regardless of size, has deliveries. Deliveries and delivery vehicles can be anticipated or not. When the city anticipates deliveries there are loading and off-loading zones placed strategically in the mercantile district to balance the needs of traffic, pedestrians, delivery personnel and merchants.

When cities do not anticipate this need, deliveries occur anyway. Trucks park and load or off-load at the whim of the delivery person who needs an accessible place to move the merchandise. The city's options when confronted with a lack of planned loading zones is either to enforce the "no parking" rules or tolerate the disruption...of course the city is not inconvenienced, rather the delivery personnel and drivers on the street.

Ideas to consider when designing a loading zone plan:

- Work with the merchants.
- Work with the frequent delivery companies knowing that deliveries will continue to grow.
- Agree to some principles, such as:
 - Peak hours are not great times to disrupt traffic with delivery trucks stopped in travel lanes on main streets.
 - Side streets offer good 24/7 locations from a traffic perspective but may put too much distance between the delivery truck and the destination for the goods.
 - Designated pull-over spots on the main street may allow 24/7 zones for loading and off-loading that are not disruptive.
 - Loading docks recessed inside buildings works for larger buildings.



A designated zone on a busy street.



A 24/7 side street zone, not designated.



Off-loading in a travel lane during the lunch hour...a tough approach, especially with a cut-out space nearby.

The main point is to accept deliveries as reality in a successful commercial zone and plan accordingly.