

TRUCK PARKING SHORTAGE SUMMARY



FACTS: SAFETY

- Truck parking shortages are a national safety concern. Among those concerns is public safety. Tired drivers have difficulty in finding a place to park and rest. This presents a danger to the motoring public.
- Another major concern is driver safety. Truck drivers are often forced to park in unsafe locations.
- Required in 2012 by MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), and with legislation in tandem with “Jason’s Law” - a national priority was launched to address the shortage of long-term parking for commercial vehicles.

JASON’S LAW

- A movement started by Hope Rivenburg is named in honor of her husband Jason who was murdered in 2009 because he was unable to find a safe place to park. Due to her tireless efforts, and those of countless of others, federal legislation was established to focus national attention to the issue of truck parking shortages.
- Now known as Jason’s Law, it requires the development of a set of metrics to measure the adequacy of truck parking in the United States.

THE SURVEY

- In the time since Jason’s Law was enacted, Hope has sponsored a survey highlighting the issues. **Among some of the findings:**
- 39% of drivers responding said it can take 1 hour or longer to find parking.
- 88% of drivers felt unsafe while parked during mandatory rest or waiting for pick-up or delivery of a load.
- 36% said they felt safer at a shipper’s or receiver’s location.

KEY ISSUES

- Issues faced by truck drivers are not always addressed in studies and by public agencies
- Sharp increase in new competitors / increase in traffic
- The advent of JIT (just-in-time) logistics / web based retail marketing
- Economic growth
- Public safety / Driver safety / cargo theft: 86% happens in in unsecured sites, drop lots, etc.
- Federal HOS (Hours of Service) rules
- Rising real estate costs in regions with heavy truck parking demand
- Congestion in areas where demand for truck parking exceeds availability
- Stakeholders (shippers, receivers, manufactures, suppliers, etc., that do not allow overnight parking on their property)
- Inconsistent focuses throughout the nation / some states have robust programs while others do not

CHALLENGES

- Truck parking capacity in much of the United States is constrained by aging facilities, economic factors, as well as public opposition to new facilities in suburban areas
- Environmental concerns – air quality and noise – related to truck idling
- Risk of safety to motorists (fatigued drivers parking on roadway shoulders)
- Median parking activity vs. availability of parking at peak hours
- Educating the public about the role of trucks stops in freight transportation and the economic importance of truck stops as commercial establishments
- Shortages are compounded by municipalities passing ordinances prohibiting truck parking

STATE AND REGIONAL CORE ISSUES

- In 2012, Pennsylvania received over 4 million dollars in federal grants for projects related to the truck parking shortage. It estimated that the state needs 8 times that amount for proposed projects to be effective
- In 2007, the Pennsylvania State Transportation Advisory Committee published a comprehensive report addressing truck parking in Pennsylvania. The Lehigh Valley was identified as a parking “hot spot.” At the time of the study, it was estimated that over 13,000 trucks require parking accommodations between peak hours. Its estimated that a shortfall of 4,400 spots within the commonwealth
- Truck parking demand in Pennsylvania is expected to grow approximately 50% by the year 2030
- There is no clear “champion” or lead organization to address the problem

SUMMARY AND SOLUTIONS

- The dynamics effecting truck parking shortages are complex. While the federal government has allocated funds to study and help alleviate the issues, it is left to each state to address them.
- Eligible project funding that goes by the acronym of: SAFETEA-LU (The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act) was authorized to address the issue with a Truck Parking Pilot Program. When MAP-21 was signed into law, the program was discontinued, the funds exhausted.
- Over the last decade a wealth of data has been collected / stakeholders must participate in the discussion. States need to conduct truck parking demand analyses.
- PennDOT and its planning partners (MPO's and RPO's) have a well-developed process for determining transportation needs and establishing investment priorities through long-range plans and near term Transportation Improvement Programs. (*source: TAC report*)
- The implementation of these efforts could be developed in partnership with the PMTA (Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association)
- Reevaluate approaches for accommodating the growing truck parking demand on toll facilities, particularly the PA Turnpike mainline.
- Quoting from a TAC summary on planning and finance; "The need for truck parking is growing, while capacity remains static. The maxim that whatever is not measured is not addressed is true." Metrics developed with the trucking industry need to include basic quantitative information across the board.
- ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) must be researched and employed. TAC recommended that Pennsylvania needs to build on technology currently underway in other states.
- TAC also recommended that PA. needs to evaluate new truck parking design concepts to provide improved access to services.
- **Park My Truck and Trucker Path Pro** are a couple of the latest efforts by industry stakeholders that use crowd-source technology to provide drivers real-time information on the availability of commercial vehicle parking at truck stops. They are accessible for free by internet or through smart-phone apps by all professional drivers, trucking fleets, state and other administrators of highway rest areas.
- Expand parking capacity by looking at industrial parks and other non-traditional parking locations.

SOURCES

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Truck Parking Shortage Exposes Drivers to Crime – Trucks.com – 8.2.2016

Washington State DOT Truck Parking Survey – 8.2016

Florida DOT – Truck Parking, *Defining the Issue*

Transportation Sustainability Research Center – *Smart Truck Parking: Forecasting Parking Availability at Truck Stops*; University of California, Berkeley

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