

## General Themes from SDOT Parking Expert Panel Meetings

### Held June 23, 2011 for SDOT's Performance-Based Parking Pricing Study

1. "One to two spaces available per block"
  - Good policy and statement of principle – it is not a goal and it does not tell the entire story
  - "Bumper Sticker" /"Iconic Goal"
  - Need to define what want to achieve with space availability
  - Not only way to measure success – areas with high demand may never achieve availability goal
  - Areas with low demand may also not achieve availability goal – rate floor may be appropriate
  - Needs flexibility at staff level to implement it
  - Must pay attention to high occupancy areas where achieving 1 – 2 spaces is not the best outcome; parking rates would be politically untenable
  - If don't address disabled parking, will have limited success achieving occupancy, turnover goals
  - Right metrics are important - consider other measures of success such as turnover (e.g., New York pilot example)
  - Consider communication strategy when choosing the strategy
  
2. Parking Strategies – two examples discussed primarily
  - a. Progressive rate pricing
    - Goals are both occupancy and turnover
    - Allows for option of longer stay; positive public, retail perception
    - Pricing still incents occupancy, turnover goals
    - Can be difficult to communicate to parking public
    - Rate is a tool to get to goal
    - Could consider with 4-hour time limit or no time limits
    - Best in high-demand areas
    - Better with pay- by- space technology
  - b. Time of day ("Time Buckets")
    - Rates set in time bands/zones
    - Time zones based on markets/activity levels
    - San Francisco uses 9 a.m. – Noon; Noon – 3 pm; 3 pm – 7 pm; 7 pm – 11 pm
    - Have to decide whether to vary time bucket parameters by neighborhood or maintain citywide time bucket consistency for customer ease of use
  - c. Other strategies – event rates, no time limits, disabled parking
    - Could consider "master lease" by City of off-street spaces to address DP parking
    - Color code meters in high demand areas different from those in low demand areas
  
3. Technology
  - Technology is a tool to achieve the goal
  - Important to apply the right tool to the right situation
  - Technology can assist the system to be customer friendly (e.g., Pay by Cell)
  - Needs to be reliable
  - "Do not fall in love with technology"
  - There is a relationship between cost and reliability of data
  - Space sensors are unproven and expensive – let others install and test

#### 4. On-Street Parking is not about storing cars

- It is about people and access to where people want to go – “Access and Mobility for Communities and People”
- It is important to understand customers/market/each community needs
- System should be managed to serve the customer
- “Parking is not the end reason, it is part of the experience”
- “Be careful about equating on-street parking with neighborhood success”
- Parking cannot create demand; if the neighborhood does not offer desirable goods, lowering the parking rate won’t increase occupancy, you need an economic development strategy – not parking
- Parking professionals are access managers/accommodators/service providers – not just regulators
- Coordination with other transportation demand measures (TDM) is important

#### 5. Communication Strategy

- Be clear about what we are trying to achieve - Speak to the public often (What)
- Technology is a tool to achieve the goal – keep it simple: progressive rates or time of day
- Communicate to users about how to use the system
- Different audiences: business owners, property owners, visitors
- Business owners/merchants have relationship with customer and can assist with communication

#### 6. Key ingredients to build a successful parking brand

- Five Key ingredients:
  - Be memorable; Positive Identification - Use Seattle on the name (e.g., ParkSeattle)
  - Appear to be affordable and understandable – clear rate structure/easy to communicate
  - Appear to be convenient (website, pay stations clearly marked) – Experience must be easy
  - Create perception of being clean and safe
  - Be easy – easy to park and then easy to become a pedestrian (signage, way finding)
- “How would your parking system be if it was run by Nordstrom?”
- Parking Enforcement Officers to help promoting parking brand and assist parkers
- Begin with “welcome,” finish with “thank you”
- To build a positive image, consider using parking revenues to pay for tangible neighborhood investments
- This project should positively change people’s perception about parking in Seattle