



Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Seattle Department of Transportation

Grace Crunican, Director

October 19, 2005

Subject: Planned New Parking Pay Stations in Downtown Ballard

Dear Downtown Ballard business owners, residents and property owners:

In early September, SDOT proposed installing new paid parking in areas of Downtown Ballard, in addition to converting the existing single-space meters to pay stations. **SDOT has scaled back the candidate areas for expansion after careful review of on-street parking conditions, area land uses, and community comments about the difficulties of changing from free to paid parking.** The changes SDOT is proposing to make reflect the input of the Ballard Parking Workgroup, made up of community stakeholders and representatives.

The enclosed map shows the smaller plan for new pay stations and time-limit signs. The purpose of these changes is to address several "hot spots" where current parking regulations are not working well to create turnover, address the impacts from new developments recently completed or underway, and maintain the balance that currently exists between the neighborhood's customers, employees and residents.

#### New Paid Parking Areas

- **NW Market Street between 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW.** Average occupancy is high and many vehicles stay past the posted time-limits. Turnover can be improved with paid parking.
- **NW 57<sup>th</sup> Street (south side) between 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW; 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW (west side) and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues NW (east side) between NW 56<sup>th</sup> Street and NW 57<sup>th</sup> Street.** Compared to the metered spaces on NW 56<sup>th</sup> Street, the mostly time-limited spaces on these blockfaces are full and many vehicles overstay the time-limits.
- **Please note:** On the east side of 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW (between Ballard Avenue NW and NW Market Street, and between NW 56<sup>th</sup> Street and NW 57<sup>th</sup> Street), development projects resulted in the removal of parking meters. Pay stations will be installed on those blocks during the parking meter conversion.

#### New Time-Limit Signs Areas

- **Around the east, south and west sides of the Ballard Commons Park and QFC redevelopment block:** Two-hour signs will be installed on the west side of 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW, north side of NW 57<sup>th</sup> Street, and east side of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW. They will be monitored to ensure they are working to create turnover. Signs will also be installed on the south side of NW 57<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the Library.
- **Along Russell Avenue NW and Leary Avenue NW between NW Market Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW:** The 1-hour spaces on some parts of these blocks can be very full and over 40% of the parked vehicles stay past the time-limit. The 1-hour signs will be replaced with 2-hour signs, and new signs will be installed along the currently unrestricted portions of these blocks.

SDOT recognizes that the change from free to paid parking can be a challenging transition. In Seattle's business districts, paid parking and time-limit signs ensure that spaces are available for the short periods of time that visitors need to buy a gift, go out to lunch, or run other errands.



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### Timeline for Installation

- Converting existing meters to pay stations and installing new pay stations will begin the week of November 14, 2005. The conversions and new installations are expected to last until mid-December. On the new paid parking blocks, blue street signs will be installed two weeks in advance to let area parkers prepare for the change.
- All parking spaces will have 2-hour or 30-minute time limits and operate between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Bus stops and layover zones, peak period restrictions and other spaces will not change. Some load zones may be moved closer to intersections.
- “Meter greeters” in red hats and vests will be on-hand to help pay station users through the end of the year and the holiday shopping season. If problems with the pay stations occur, please call SDOT at 206-684-ROAD.
- Business owners or managers interested in free, City-installed on-street bicycle racks should contact the SDOT Bicycle Program at 206-684-7583 or email [pauh.wang@seattle.gov](mailto:pauh.wang@seattle.gov).

### Community Outreach Report Back

During consideration of the original, larger study area for possible pay station expansion, SDOT staff attended six community meetings to discuss the proposed parking changes:

- Ballard Chamber of Commerce Luncheons – April and October meetings
- Ballard District Council – April and October meetings
- Ballard Parking Workgroup – August 26 and September 23 meetings
- Ballard Avenue Landmarks Board – September 1 meeting

SDOT received a tremendous number of comments from citizens at these community meetings, by email and by direct phone contact with SDOT staff. Many comments were in opposition to new paid parking on NW 57<sup>th</sup> and NW 58<sup>th</sup> Streets that could create additional spillover parking into the surrounding residential neighborhoods. There were also many comments from residents and business owners on Ballard Avenue NW who believe the existing 2-hour time-limit signs are working well to create customer parking while accommodating the needs of the area’s many residents. SDOT generally heard positive and neutral comments regarding proposed pay stations on NW Market Street and the QFC/Ballard Commons block.

### Streets Defined as Good Candidates for Continued Monitoring and Review

At this time, SDOT recommends continued monitoring of the parking on Ballard Avenue NW to ensure that there is adequate turnover for the street’s retail businesses. A 2006 review of the City’s existing Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) program will look at alternatives for managing competing parking demands in mixed-use areas.

### For more information

Please contact Meghan Shepard, the Seattle Department of Transportation project manager, at 206-684-4208 or [meghan.shepard@seattle.gov](mailto:meghan.shepard@seattle.gov). A copy of the on-street parking report is available from SDOT at [www.seattle.gov/transportation/parking/paystation\\_where.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/parking/paystation_where.htm).

Sincerely,

Katherine Casseday, P.E.

Director of Traffic Management and City Traffic Engineer