

# PARK Smart Greenwich Village Pilot



## Purpose

- Pilot an innovative parking management program with community support
- Increase the availability of curbside, metered parking
- Reduce double-parking, traffic and pollution caused by drivers searching for an available parking space

## Outreach

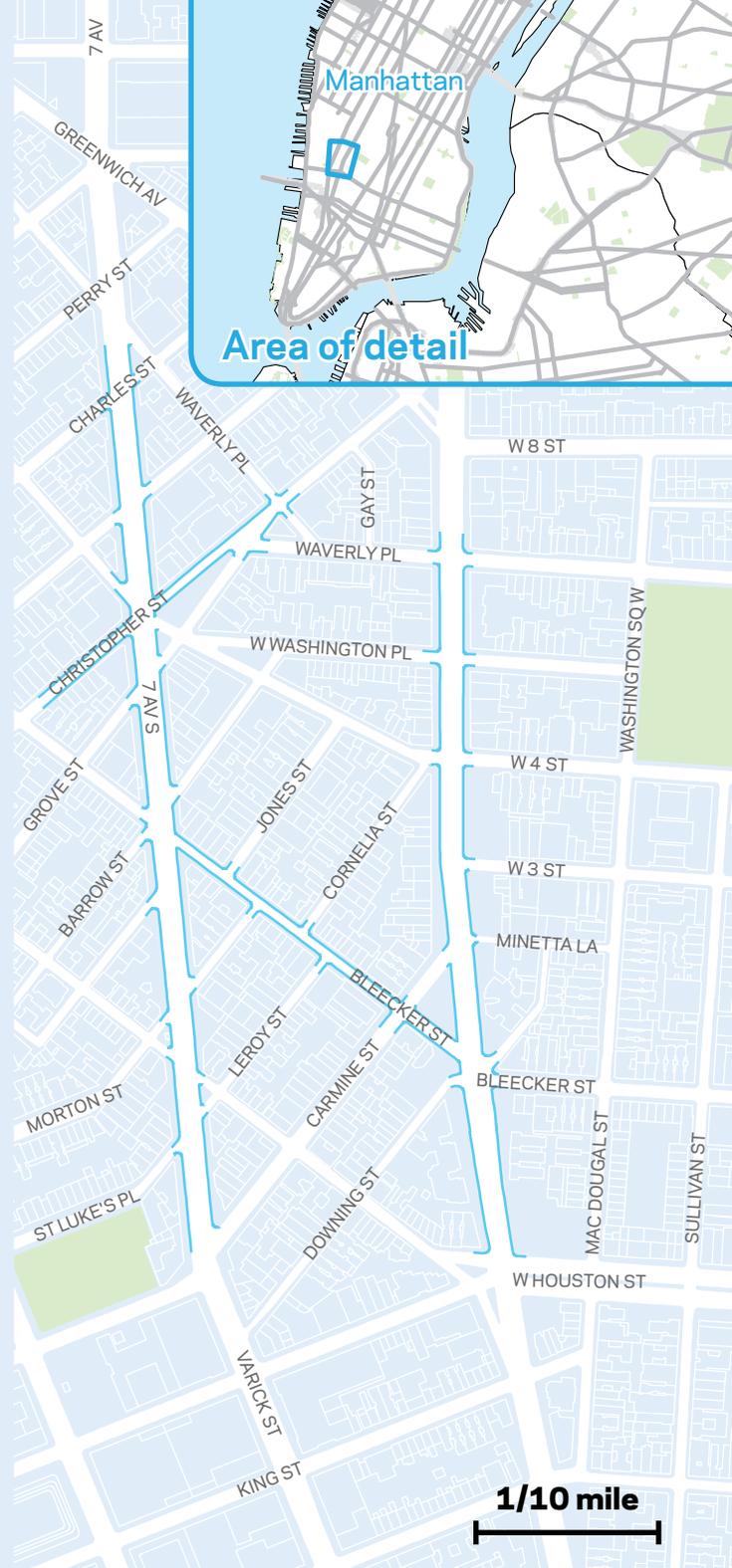
- Engaged Community Board 2 (CB2) and local merchant group in the development of a pilot program
- Shared the results of parking study of the area with CB2 and local business leaders to gain their support
- Community board supported pilot and based on results, supported making the program permanent and expanding the boundaries

## Approach

- Increased parking meter rates during the peak period (noon to 4 p.m.)
- Conducted outreach with local merchants to inform them and their customers of the new rate
- Collected data at one-month and six-month stages to monitor the impact of the program

## Results

- PARK Smart meters show an increase in the number of available parking spaces as compared with pre-implementation levels
- Parking space occupancy declined from 77% to 71% on Tuesdays and from 75% to 69% on Fridays while the peak rate is in effect
- Motorists were parking for somewhat shorter periods



Greenwich Village is a vibrant neighborhood with a diverse mix of uses. The main north-south roadways of Seventh Avenue and Avenue of the Americas are lined with restaurants and shops while the side streets are more residential. As in many similar neighborhoods, the demand for parking is often so high, however, that drivers have trouble finding a space near their destination.

DOT has 89,000 on-street and off-street metered spaces in New York City, most of which are in commercial and shopping areas located throughout the five boroughs. Metering of parking spaces is designed to encourage turnover of parked vehicles and provide the opportunity for different shoppers use the same parking spot over the course of the day. The demand for parking is often so high, however, that drivers have trouble finding a space near their destination. The result can be that drivers circle the block to find an available space, creating unnecessary traffic congestion and air pollution. Out of frustration at the lack of available parking, drivers may be discouraged from patronizing local businesses. Moreover, when parking spaces are not available, drivers may double park and block traffic. These conditions also make bus service slower and less reliable, thus making buses less attractive to potential riders.

In order to address these issues, DOT developed the PARK Smart program, which consists of six peak-rate parking pilots in neighborhoods around the city. The goals of PARK Smart are to increase the availability of parking spaces in commercial areas, thereby improving traffic flow and safety by reducing double parking and cruising. To achieve this, the price of on-street metered parking is set based on the level of demand for parking, particularly during the afternoon peak hours when parking demand is heaviest.

Each PARK Smart pilot is developed based on interest from community boards and merchant representatives. Throughout the project, implementation is carried out in close consultation between DOT and these groups. Outreach and media attention are important in notifying drivers

and the community of the new rates and policies. DOT also conducts an extensive evaluation of the pilot, collecting data on parking occupancy, turnover and traffic volumes, and surveys drivers, merchants and shoppers. The public engagement and data collection programs are funded by a grant from the United States Department of Transportation Value Pricing Pilot Program.

For the first PARK Smart pilot, in Greenwich Village, DOT met with Manhattan Community Board 2 (CB2) and the local Chamber of Commerce in spring 2008. These groups expressed interest in developing a pilot in Greenwich Village. DOT conducted a study of the area and presented the results to the transportation committee of CB2. DOT and CB2 devised the boundaries of the pilot, hours of operation and rate in a collaborative process. In July 2008 the transportation committee and full community board adopted a resolution in support of the final plan. Prior to implementation, DOT staff visited businesses in the area to explain the program. The pilot began in October 2008.

The pilot area covered portions of Seventh Avenue from Charles to Houston Streets and Sixth Avenue from W. 4<sup>th</sup> to Houston Street and included all meters on streets between these avenues. The rate was increased when demand for parking is greatest (noon to 4 p.m.) from \$1/hour to \$2/hour. The rate remained at the pre-existing rate of \$1/hour at all other times that meters are in effect. The pilot ran for six months from October 2008 to March 2009.



PARK Smart increases the availability of curbside parking by raising parking meter rates during the peak period.

# Weekday parking availability improved six percentage points as a result of the PARK Smart pilot in Greenwich Village.

Under the PARK Smart rate structure, the number of available parking spaces increased compared with pre-implementation levels. This is due to the higher rate of turnover at spots in the PARK Smart area. Parking space occupancy improved from 77% to 71% on Tuesdays and from 75% to 69% on Fridays during the noon to 4 p.m. period (while the peak rate is in effect). Occupancies were only slightly changed on Saturdays, with occupancies at PARK Smart meters increasing from 67% to 71%, reaching an occupancy rate comparable to the weekday level.

Overall, motorists were parking for a somewhat shorter amount of time. The proportion of vehicles parked for less than one hour increased from 48% to 60%, while the proportion of vehicles parked for more than one hour decreased from 52% to 40%.

In June 2009, DOT returned to CB2 to discuss making the program permanent, and any changes that might be appropriate. CB2 adopted a resolution in support of making the program permanent, expanding the

boundaries north to 14<sup>th</sup> Street, and making the rate structure consistent with a citywide increase in parking meter rates. The permanent rates in Greenwich Village are \$3/hour during the noon to 4 p.m. peak and \$2/hour at all other times that meters are in effect.

A second PARK Smart pilot began in Park Slope, Brooklyn, in May 2009. Results of this pilot will be discussed in a future report.

Average Occupancy at PARK Smart Meters

	Before Noon			Noon to 4 p.m.			After 4 p.m.		
	Base	One Mo.	Six Mo.	Base	One Mo.	Six Mo.	Base	One Mo.	Six Mo.
Tues.	61%	56%	58%	77%	66%	71%	66%	60%	61%
Fri.	57%	71%	63%	75%	71%	69%	70%	75%	68%
Sat.	41%	N/A	37%	67%	N/A	71%	78%	N/A	81%

Base data collected in September 2008. One-month snapshot collected in November 2008. Six month data collected in March 2009.