


# DIRECTOR'S RULE 01-2025

## Restricted Parking Zones (RPZs)



<b>Subject:</b> Restricted Parking Zones (RPZs)	Page 1 of 25 Supersedes: SDOT Director's Rules 4-2009 Publication: November 5, 2025 Effective: XX <b>04/01/2026</b>
<b>Type of Rule:</b> Code Interpretation	<b>Ordinance Authority:</b> SMC 3.12.020
<b>Code and Section Reference:</b> SMC Chapters 11.14.515, 11.16.120.F and G. 11.16.315, 11.16.316, 11.16.317, 11.16.319, 11.28.010, 11.31.121 and 11.72.351  Ordinance 123001	<b>Approved:</b>  <hr/> Director, Seattle Department of Transportation

# Contents

<b>1. REFERENCES</b> .....	4	<b>10. BUSINESS/ EMPLOYEE PERMITS IN SOUTHEAST SEATTLE LINK LIGHT RAIL STATION AREAS</b> .....	14
<b>2. RULE AND APPLICABILITY</b> .....	5	10.1 Background.....	14
<b>3. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS</b> .....	6	10.2 Application .....	14
<b>4. DEFINITIONS</b> .....	7	10.3 Permit Limits.....	14
<b>5. RESTRICTED PARKING ZONE PERMIT TYPES</b> .....	8	10.4 Conditions of Use.....	14
<b>6. RESIDENT PERMITS</b> .....	9	10.5 Guest Permits.....	15
6.1 Application .....	9	10.6 Monitoring.....	15
6.2 Permit Limits.....	9	<b>11. BUSINESS/EMPLOYEE PERMITS: OTHER AREAS</b> .....	16
6.3 Conditions of Use.....	9	11.1 Background.....	16
6.4 Income-eligible Fee.....	10	11.2 Application .....	16
6.5 License Plate or Vehicle Changes .....	10	11.3 Permit Limits.....	17
<b>7. GUEST PERMITS</b> .....	11	11.4 Conditions of Use.....	17
7.1 Application .....	11	11.5 Guest Permits.....	17
7.2 Permit Limits.....	11	<b>12. RPZ CREATION</b> .....	18
7.3 Conditions of Use.....	11	12.1 Background.....	18
7.4 Income-eligible Fee.....	11	12.2 Request for an RPZ.....	18
7.5 Replacement Guest Permits .....	11	12.3 Parking Study .....	19
<b>8. 60-DAY SHORT TERM PERMITS</b> .....	12	12.4 Community Engagement and RPZ Design .....	20
8.1 Application .....	12	12.5 Boundaries .....	20
8.2 Permit Limits.....	12	12.6 SDOT Decision .....	20
8.3 Conditions of Use.....	12	12.7 Reconsideration and the Appeal Process.....	21
<b>9. SINGLE-DAY SHORT TERM PERMITS</b> .....	13	12.8 Implementation and Review.....	21
9.1 Application .....	13	<b>13. PERMIT ELIGIBILITY WITHIN AN RPZ</b> .....	22
9.2 Permit Limits.....	13	<b>14. RPZ MODIFICATIONS</b> .....	23
9.3 Conditions of Use.....	13	14.1 Small-scale Modifications.....	23
		14.2 Large-scale Modifications.....	23
		14.3 Implementation and Review.....	24
		<b>15. RPZ REMOVAL</b> .....	25
		15.1 Data-gathering and Community Engagement.....	25
		15.2 SDOT Decision .....	25

# 1

## References

- 1.1 Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 11.14.515
- 1.2 SMC Chapter 11.16.120.F and G
- 1.3 SMC Chapter 11.16.315 – 319
- 1.4 SMC Chapter 11.28.010.D
- 1.5 SMC Chapter 11.31.121
- 1.6 SMC Chapter 11.72.351
- 1.7 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 46.16.381

## 2

## Rule and Applicability

- 2.1 The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is authorized to create, modify, or remove Restricted Parking Zones (RPZ) and to promulgate rules and regulations for the RPZ program by 11.16.120.F and G. Fees for permits are set by SMC Chapter 11.16.319. Citable offenses are described in SMC Chapter 11.72.351.
- 2.2 This Rule interprets the SMC Sections 11.14.515, 11.16.120.F and G, 11.16.315 - 319, 11.28.010.D, 11.31.121, and 11.72.351 about the RPZ program, including application requirements and administrative processes for issuing permits and creating, modifying, and removing zones.
- 2.3 Restrictions established by this program do not apply to vehicles displaying a placard, license plate, or disabled parking tab issued pursuant to RCW 46.16.381 [disabled parking placard/license plate], motorcycles and scooters (SMC.16.315.F) or free-floating car sharing vehicles with a valid free-floating car sharing permit (SMC 11.16.315.G) per SMC 11.72.351.
- 2.4 SDOT works in partnership with other City agencies to implement electric vehicle (EV) charging in the public right-of-way to support a reduction in transportation carbon emissions. SDOT restricts curbspace locations for EV charging throughout the City of Seattle and may restrict curbspace for this purpose within an RPZ. Even though an EV charger may be located within an RPZ, an RPZ permit is not required to park in a curbspace location designated for EV charging. EV charging parking restrictions are distinct from RPZ parking restrictions and may have time limits that are distinct from the RPZ.

# 3

## Program Purpose and Goals

SDOT administers the RPZ Program to reduce commuter or recurring event-related traffic congestion and parking near large parking demand generators in residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.

Program goals include the following:

- Reduce neighborhood traffic impacts by large parking demand generators;
- Reduce overall energy use and vehicle emissions;
- Support mixed-use neighborhoods and local business districts; and
- Implement a program with simple rules that are easily understood and clearly applied.

## 4

# Definitions

The following definitions are from SMC Chapter 11.14.062 and 11.14.515 and apply throughout this rule:

- 4.1 “Restricted parking zone” or “RPZ” means a portion of the street commonly used for vehicular parking where vehicles properly displaying a permit or other authorization pursuant to Chapter 11.16 SMC are exempt from the posted RPZ parking restrictions.
- 4.2 “RPZ Permit” means a card, decal or other identification issued to an eligible person to be placed on the vehicle that enables it to park in a restricted parking zone.
- 4.3 “Resident” means any person residing in a household unit that is located adjacent to or in a prescribed vicinity of a restricted parking zone.
- 4.4 “Guest” means a person temporarily visiting residents or temporarily having business with residents who are eligible for RPZ permits.
- 4.5 “Guest Permit” means a card, decal or other identification issued to an eligible person to be placed in the vehicle that enables it to park in a restricted parking zone, for an annual, biennial or single-day timeframe.
- 4.6 “Household Unit” means any self-contained house, apartment, condominium, town house, floating home, detached or attached accessory dwelling unit, or group home that contains living, sleeping and cooking quarters and is used by any number of related persons or up to eight unrelated individuals. Each unit of a multiple-unit residential dwelling is considered a separate household unit.
- 4.7 “Blockface” means one side of a block between road intersections.
- 4.8 “Business” means any person or entity that possesses a valid City of Seattle business license and that conducts commercial work at the business address listed on the business license, including but not limited to, retail sales and service, warehouse, non-household sales and service, or entertainment.
- 4.9 “Employee” means any individual who performs work, labor, or services and is on the payroll of a business or institution. This includes all full-time, part-time, and temporary employees including partners of the business or institution located in or adjacent to a RPZ.
- 4.10 “Institution” means any organization of a public character, including but not limited to, a school, hospital, religious facility, health care, social or community service agency, library, university, or museum.
- 4.11 “Volunteer” means any individual who performs volunteer work for a business or institution at least three times a week.

## 5

## Restricted Parking Zone Permit Types

Permit Type	Permit Holder	Description	Vehicle-Specific (Y/N)	Duration
Resident	RPZ resident	A resident permit exempts residents in an RPZ from posted RPZ time restrictions in their zone. Resident permits are digital permits.	Y	Two years (zones 6 and 10 renew every year)
Guest	RPZ resident	A guest permit exempts visitors of a resident in a RPZ from posted RPZ time restrictions in the resident's zone. Guest permits are issued as hangtags.	N	Two years (zones 6 and 10 renew every year)
Temporary	RPZ permit applicant	A temporary permit is issued to permit applicants while the permit application is reviewed and processed.	N	varies
60-Day Short Term	RPZ resident	A short term 60-day permit may be used by residents, or visitors or contractors of an RPZ resident.	Y	60 days
Single-Day Short Term	RPZ resident	A short term single-day permit may be used by residents, or visitors or contractors of a RPZ resident.	N	One day
Business/Employee	RPZ business owner, manager, or institution head	A business/ employee permit exempts employees in an RPZ from posted RPZ time restrictions in their workplace's zone.	Y	Two years
Business/Employee-Guest	RPZ business owner, manager, or institution head	A business/ employee guest permit exempts visitors of a business or institution in an RPZ from posted RPZ time restrictions in the business's zone.	N	Two years

## 6 Resident Permits

### 6.1 APPLICATION

To obtain a resident RPZ permit, an applicant must submit a complete application, agree to follow all program rules, and provide proof of residency and a copy of a current Washington State Vehicle Registration. Current proof of residency must be provided in one of the following forms:

- utility bill
- phone bill
- bank statement
- paycheck stub
- rent receipt; or
- lease or rental agreement

To be considered a current form of residency, the document must be dated or issued within the previous 30 days from the date of the RPZ permit application date.

Out-of-state registration is accepted only for active-duty military personnel providing current valid military identification, or out-of-state students providing a letter from the registrar's office or a tuition statement showing non-resident status.

The applicant's vehicle registration address must match the applicant's household unit address, except for out-of-state students and active-duty military personnel as listed above. Applicants may contact the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) for information on how to change their vehicle registration address if needed. Applicable permit fees must be paid.

SDOT may issue a temporary permit while a permit application is being reviewed and processed.

### 6.2 PERMIT LIMITS

The maximum number of resident permits per household unit address is four. This limit does not include guest permits, or short-term permits that are described in Sections 7, 8 and 9.

SDOT may issue more resident RPZ permits than the four-permit limit per household for the following land uses (SMC 11.16.315.D.1):

- adult family home;
- assisted living facility;
- domestic violence shelter; and
- permitted congregate residence, provided the amount does not exceed one per sleeping room.

In determining whether to allow additional permits in excess of the four-permit limit per household, SDOT may also consider the availability of on-street parking in the applicant's residential area and the demonstrated need for additional permits.

### 6.3 CONDITIONS OF USE

Resident permits are valid for a two-year period, except Zone 6 and 10 permits that are valid for one year. Each Zone has a different renewal date, and all permits in a Zone expire at the same time. Resident permits are issued for a specific vehicle and are valid only for the Zone where the resident permit holder resides. In addition, a resident permit is valid only for use within six contiguous blocks of the resident's RPZ address.

As described in SMC 11.72.351, the following are parking violations relating to RPZs and are included here to explain the conditions of use of a resident permit:

1. The RPZ permit does not match the vehicle. Resident RPZ permits are specific to a vehicle. See section 6.5 below about vehicle changes.
2. Permit zone number does not match the zone where the vehicle is parked. If a vehicle is parked in a zone other than the zone associated with the permit, it is not exempt from the zone's posted parking restrictions, and a citation may be issued. Vehicles without permits can also be cited if they are parked for longer than the limit allowed; often two hours of parking are allowed without a permit.
3. The vehicle is parked within same zone as permit indicates but parked more than six blocks from the address for which the permit is issued. This six-block requirement is intended to reduce the ability for a permit to be used improperly, that is, by a person trying to park closer to a place of employment, or trying to park closer to board transit, or some other reason other than parking near the residence of the permit owner. If a vehicle is parked more than six blocks from the address for which the permit was issued, it is not exempt from the posted parking restrictions, and a citation may be issued.

## 6.4 INCOME-ELIGIBLE FEE

An applicant who provides documentation of current enrollment in any of the following programs is entitled to a reduced income-eligible RPZ permit fee:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Energy assistance from Seattle City Light (Utility Discount Program) or Puget Sound Energy

- Rental assistance from Seattle Housing Authority (Section 8) or renting in an SHA-managed property
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Renting from a low-income housing provider, such as Plymouth Housing Group or CHHIP
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- King County Metro income-eligible ORCA LIFT card
- Aged, Blind, or Disabled Cash Assistance Program (ABD)
- Housing and Essential Needs Program (HEN)
- Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)

The documentation must be current and issued in the applicant's name. The address on the document must be the same as the RPZ-eligible address in the permit application. Other documents may be considered on an individual basis.

## 6.5 LICENSE PLATE OR VEHICLE CHANGES

Resident RPZ permits are license-plate and vehicle-specific. Permit holders must notify SDOT to update their permit if there are changes to a permit holder's license plate or vehicle. There is no fee to update the permit with the new license plate or vehicle information.

SDOT may issue a temporary permit until the applicant acquires a new vehicle registration, or the resident may apply for a short term 60-day permit if they need additional time to complete their vehicle registration. The previous permit will be cancelled.

# 7

## Guest Permits

### 7.1 APPLICATION

An applicant must submit a complete application to obtain a guest permit. The applicant must provide current proof of residency, as described in Section 6.1 above. A resident is not required to purchase a resident permit to obtain a guest permit. Permit fees must also be paid, as required.

SDOT may issue a temporary guest permit while a permit application is being reviewed and processed.

### 7.2 PERMIT LIMITS

Each household unit address is eligible for one guest permit.

### 7.3 CONDITIONS OF USE

Like resident permits, guest permits are valid for a two-year period unless noted otherwise for a particular zone. Guest permits may only be used by visitors of a resident or a person temporarily having business with a resident. The guest permit must be hung from the rear-view mirror of the guest's vehicle so that the front of the permit is visible from outside the vehicle. Like a resident permit, a guest permit must be used only in its specific RPZ-permitted zone and no more than six blocks from the RPZ-permitted address.

A resident may not use a guest permit on their own vehicle, as prohibited by SMC 11.16.315. It is also a violation of the SMC to sell, trade, buy, or acquire for value a guest permit (SMC 11.28.010.) Improper use of a guest permit is a violation of SMC 11.72.351 and may result in permit revocation, citations and fines.

### 7.4 INCOME-ELIGIBLE FEE

The same income-eligible reduced fee requirements for resident permits apply to guest permits (see Section 6.4 above).

### 7.5 REPLACEMENT GUEST PERMITS

SDOT will replace a lost guest permit no more than twice during the two-year permit cycle. After replacing two during one two-year permit cycle, SDOT will not issue additional guest permits until the next permit cycle. A fee is required for replacement guest permits.

### 8.1 APPLICATION

An applicant must submit a complete application to obtain a 60-day short term permit. If the applicant does not have a current resident RPZ permit, the applicant must provide current proof of residency as described in Section 6.1 above.

SDOT may issue a short term permit to a resident that is valid up to 60 days on a case-by-case basis. SDOT may consider the following circumstances and conditions when reviewing an application for a 60-day short term permit:

- a new applicant is applying for a resident RPZ permit within 60 days of their zone's renewal date;
- the applicant has construction occurring at their RPZ-eligible address; in that case, the applicant may apply for a maximum of five concurrent permits for use by contractors;
- the applicant is a student and is in the process of acquiring Washington State registration;
- the applicant has acquired a new vehicle and is in the process of acquiring Washington State registration;
- the applicant is a full-time non-resident student with an out-of-state license plate;
- the applicant is residing at a domestic violence shelter, adult family home, or transitional housing;

For residents of domestic violence shelters, adult family homes that do or do not include drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities, and transitional housing, SDOT may issue 60-day permits if the resident will be at the facility for less than 120 days. If the resident will live at the facility for longer than 120 days, the resident is not eligible for a 60-day permit and must apply for a resident RPZ permit and comply with all requirements, including having the vehicle registered at the resident's RPZ-eligible address.

SDOT may issue a temporary permit while the 60-day permit application is being reviewed and processed.

### 8.2 PERMIT LIMITS

Generally, after the first 60-day permit or group of permits has been issued for a particular address, subsequent 60-day permits may only be reissued one time for an additional 60-day period.

### 8.3 CONDITIONS OF USE

Like resident permits, 60-day permits must be used in the zone they are issued for and no more than six blocks from the permitted RPZ address, and may not be sold, bought, or given away. 60-day permits must be displayed clearly on the vehicle as indicated.

# 9

## Single-Day Short Term Permits

### 9.1 APPLICATION

An applicant must submit a complete application to obtain a single-day permit. If an applicant does not have a current resident RPZ permit, current proof of residency must be provided as described in Section 6.1.

### 9.2 PERMIT LIMITS

Any eligible resident may obtain a limited number of single-day guest permits, except in the Husky Stadium Event Zones (Zones A and B). The maximum allowable number of single-day use permits per household unit address per calendar year is 50. No more than five permits will be issued for any one date for a particular address. SDOT may approve an exception to the five permits per day per address limit on the basis of good cause shown for the exception. A single-day use permit will be valid for one day from 7 AM to 7 AM the following day.

### 9.3 CONDITIONS OF USE

Like other RPZ permits, single-day permits must be used in the zone they are issued for, no more than six blocks from the address they are issued for, and may not be sold, bought, or given away. Single-day permits must be displayed clearly on the vehicle as indicated.

## 10.1 BACKGROUND

SMC 11.16.316.A authorizes SDOT to administer a specific program for qualified businesses and institutions to apply for and receive permits in an RPZ that have been or may be created in the Initial Segment Link light rail transit station areas, including Rainier Beach, Othello, Columbia City, Mount Baker, and Beacon Hill areas. Permits issued under this program are in addition to RPZ permits issued to qualified residents in these RPZs.

## 10.2 APPLICATION

To obtain an RPZ permit under this program, the applicant must be a business owner or manager, or an institution director or manager within a Southeast Seattle Light Rail RPZ.

Business owners or managers, or institution directors or managers must sign and submit a complete application that includes the name of each employee requesting an RPZ permit, their license plate number, and the license plate state of issuance. All specified vehicles must have current Washington State vehicle registration, except for active-duty military personnel or full-time non-resident students. In addition, the business applying for the permits must submit a copy of its Seattle business license with their application. Institutions that are not required to have a business license must submit a current utility bill or lease agreement that documents their location within the RPZ. Volunteers are eligible for a permit if they work at least three days per week.

Commercial property owners for properties located within or adjacent to a Southeast Seattle Light Rail RPZ boundary can also obtain one permit per owner at no cost. They must submit proof of property ownership, such as a copy of a title to the property or a mortgage statement.

## 10.3 PERMIT LIMITS

Each RPZ permit must be issued for a current owner or employee, and each owner or employee may be issued only one permit. The business owner or manager, or institution director or manager must verify that names submitted are employees of the business or institution.

## 10.4 CONDITIONS OF USE

Conditions of RPZ permits issued under this program are identical to the conditions of use of all other RPZ permits. RPZ permits are issued biennially and regardless of when the permits are issued, they are valid only for that permit period. Permits are specific to a vehicle.

Permits may not be used for commercial and other large vehicles that are subject to SMC 11.72.070 and are over 80-inches wide. Permit holders who violate these conditions may have their permit revoked.

## 10.5 GUEST PERMITS

Each business or institution within a Southeast Seattle light rail RPZ boundary may obtain up to two guest permits.

Guest permits are intended for use by visitors to the business. Guest permits are not intended for use by employees.

Replacement of guest permits issued under this program is subject to the same rules as for residential guest permits under Section 7.

## 10.6 MONITORING

As authorized under SMC 11.16.315, SDOT may not renew RPZ permits for businesses and institutions in the next RPZ cycle for a Southeast Seattle light rail RPZ when monitoring or surveying of the RPZ indicates that 25% or more of streets within a RPZ have the following conditions: (1) at least 75% percent of the capacity of the street available for parking is generally occupied; and (2) more than 35% of the vehicles parked on the street are owned by non-residents of the designated area. Under this subsection, "non-resident" includes businesses, institutions, and their employees and volunteers located in the area.

Before deciding to not renew RPZ permits for businesses and institutions, SDOT staff will engage with business permit holders and the local RPZ community to share information and gather feedback. Staff will communicate the reasons for not renewing and share current parking study data.

# 11

## Business/Employee Permits: Other Areas

### 11.1 BACKGROUND

Separate from the program authorized under SMC 11.16.316 for the Southeast Seattle light rail station areas and described in Section 10, SMC 11.16.315.H authorizes SDOT to consider requests from employers within an RPZ for employee permits under specific criteria as listed in the table below, if this can be done while maintaining the following goals of the RPZ program: reduce neighborhood traffic impacts by large parking demand generators; support mixed-use neighborhoods and local business districts; continue to reduce overall energy use

and vehicle emissions; keep demand by residents and employees from exceeding available on-street parking spaces in residential areas; and implement a customer-oriented permit program.

### 11.2 APPLICATION

The Director shall consider the following criteria in determining whether to grant requests from businesses and institutions for employee RPZ permits in RPZs that are not within Southeast Seattle Link Light Rail RPZs. Consistent with SMC 11.16.315.H:

Criteria in SMC 11.16.315.H	How Criteria Will Be Applied
Availability of on-street parking on non-RPZ signed blocks that is within a reasonable walking distance of the employer	SDOT considers whether there is non-RPZ parking in an approximately ¼ mile area around the employer’s place of business.
Availability of alternate modes of transportation within a reasonable distance	SDOT will identify available transit within ¼ mile, and will consider number of routes, hours, and frequency of service. SDOT will also consider the availability of bicycle infrastructure and other alternate mode facilities.
Availability of off-street parking within a reasonable distance	SDOT will consider public parking available within ¼ mile. This includes, but is not limited to, parking that is advertised as being available on a monthly or daily basis for a fee to the general public.
Availability of on-street parking in the RPZ	Parking on RPZ blocks within ¼ mile must be under 50% full.
Time of day that employees work	SDOT will consider applicant information provided related to non-standard employee hours, when transit may be less available.
Number of permits requested by the employer	SDOT will consider the number of employee permits requested at the time of application, and potential additional permits that could be requested by the employer. Additional permits must not increase calculated potential occupancy over 85%.
Existence of other employers within the RPZ	SDOT will consider the number of other employers and employees within the RPZ who could potentially request permits. Additional permits must not increase calculated potential occupancy over 85%.
Other hardships that may exist	

If SDOT grants requests for employee permits for a zone based on the criteria above, a business owner or manager, or institution director or manager must sign and submit a complete application that includes the name of each employee requesting an RPZ permit, their license plate number, and the license plate state of issuance. Volunteers are eligible for a permit if they work at least three days per week. In addition, the business applying for the permits must submit to SDOT a copy of its Seattle business license. Institutions that are not required to have a business license must submit a current utility bill or lease agreement that documents their location within the RPZ.

### **11.3 PERMIT LIMITS**

SDOT will consider the criteria identified in Section 11.2 when determining permit limits for eligible applicants under this program.

### **11.4 CONDITIONS OF USE**

Conditions of Use are the same as in Section 10.4.

### **11.5 GUEST PERMITS**

Each business or institution may obtain up to two guest permits per organization.

Guest permits are intended for use by visitors to the business. Guest permits are not intended for use by employees.

Replacement of guest permits issued under this program is subject to the same rules as for residential guest permits under Section 7.

## 12 RPZ Creation

### 12.1 BACKGROUND

SDOT creates RPZs to reduce commuter or recurring event-related traffic congestion and parking near large parking demand generators in residential and mixed-use neighborhoods. SMC 11.16.317 B. provides the criteria for creating a new restricted parking zone. In a ten contiguous block area, (or twenty blockfaces) 75% of the available parking must be occupied, and at least 35% of the parked vehicles in the same area must belong to non-residents.

The process to create a new RPZ is typically initiated by residents, though SMC 11.16.317 authorizes SDOT to establish an RPZ when a parking problem would be ameliorated, and the public interest would be served. This may include instances where the criteria described in SMC.16.317 B. are not fully met, but where parking impacts are anticipated, such as establishing RPZs in light rail station areas in advance of light rail operation. SDOT strongly encourages community involvement in creating an RPZ, and this is particularly important if the criteria are not met.

### 12.2 REQUEST FOR AN RPZ

Residents and community organizations can request a new RPZ. A request must identify a specific parking demand generator, typically a large institution such as a university or hospital, regional event venue, or large business district drawing commuters that affect on-street parking on a minimum of ten contiguous blocks or 20 contiguous blockfaces. The request should also include the days of the week and the hours of the day that parking is a particular challenge.

A community request may take the form of several separate requests from the same neighborhood. A request from a single stakeholder will require additional community engagement before SDOT performs an initial assessment. SDOT staff will respond to requests as they are received. The timeframe for completing a parking study, community engagement efforts, and implementation may be dependent on staff resources. SDOT staff may prioritize requests based on other City priorities.

After receiving a community request, SDOT will conduct an initial assessment to determine whether an RPZ is appropriate for the area. Staff will informally observe street conditions to determine if the parking occupancy on the street is likely to meet a minimum of 75% across a ten-block area.

Based on the initial assessment, SDOT will: (1) determine the extent to which significant parking challenges may exist; and (2) determine whether the parking challenges may be best addressed by creating an RPZ. SDOT may consider other parking management tools instead of or prior to considering an RPZ. Examples could include: removing “no parking” restrictions from one side of a road to add parking capacity back to the on-street system, looking at the feasibility of angle parking to increase overall supply, or working with local businesses to encourage employees to take alternate modes of transportation to work.

### 12.3 PARKING STUDY

After SDOT determines that a new RPZ may be appropriate, a formal parking study will be completed. The purpose of the parking study is to gather more detailed information about parking duration, parking occupancy rates on different days and at different times, and the percentages of residential and non-residential vehicles parked on street in the proposed RPZ area.

Parking studies typically include multiple hourly counts of vehicles on the street at different times of day and on several different days of the week. Parking duration can be determined by using partial license plate information coupled with vehicle description. This information can also be

used to make inferences about the percentage of residential and non-residential parking. For example: vehicles observed during a 4 AM count can usually be categorized as belonging to residents or their guests, while vehicles observed during an 11 AM count may be a mix of residential and non-residential parking.

SDOT may establish a new or expand an existing RPZ when 75% of the parking on 10 contiguous blocks (20 blockfaces) is generally occupied, and when over 35% of those vehicles are used by non-residents. If these conditions are not met, SDOT will formally notify the persons requesting the RPZ that it did not qualify.



*A minimum of 10 connecting blocks or 20 connecting blockfaces must be impacted by the parking demand generator.*

## 12.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RPZ DESIGN

If the parking study suggests that creating an RPZ may be appropriate due to parking impacts from non-residents, SDOT will engage affected and interested community stakeholders to review the results of the parking study and assist in developing a proposal for a new RPZ. Based on the parking data and information provided by residents related to the RPZ request, SDOT staff will develop a draft RPZ design to include the following:

- time allowed (e.g., 2 hours) for non-permit parking;
- RPZ effective days, hours, and times;
- blocks eligible for RPZ permits; and
- blocks posted with RPZ restrictions.

In general, RPZ restrictions are installed adjacent to residential land uses within a zone.

SDOT will engage the community to share the proposal and gather input on the draft RPZ design. SDOT will use a variety of communication and engagement methods to reach as many affected people, organizations, and businesses as possible. All written materials will use plain language. Examples include the following:

- direct mailings
- project website about the proposed RPZ
- online surveys
- in-language informational and survey materials
- presentations to stakeholder organizations
- meetings, either formal or informal, virtual or in-person, with local community leaders and other stakeholders
- walking tours with staff and the community
- informational flyers
- SDOT blog post and social media posts

Before making any decision to create a new RPZ, SDOT will have a public hearing to provide an opportunity for the public to submit written and spoken comments into the public record, as required by SMC 11.16.317.C.2. SDOT will mail notices including the hearing's time and location at least 20 days before the public hearing. The notices will be sent to all owners, commercial tenants, and residents of property within 300 feet of the proposed RPZ. SDOT will also publish a notice with the hearing's time and location in a local newspaper at least 20 days before the hearing.

## 12.5 BOUNDARIES

SDOT may identify boundaries to limit expansions for new or existing RPZs. In general, zones should not exceed a reasonable walking distance, or a 1/2 mile beyond the parking demand generator for the zone. Optimal RPZ boundaries include arterials or prominent built or topographic features that may pose a physical or perceived barrier to parking near the zone's parking demand generator.

## 12.6 SDOT DECISION

SDOT will announce its decision in a local newspaper and on the SDOT project website. SDOT will also notify all owners, commercial tenants, and residents of property within 300 feet of the RPZ, and all other interested parties contacted during the parking study and development of the RPZ.

## **12.7 RECONSIDERATION AND THE APPEAL PROCESS**

Under SMC 11.16.317.D.1, SDOT's decision to create an RPZ is subject to reconsideration within 15 days of publication in a local newspaper. Requests for reconsideration may be initiated in writing by residents, business owners, employees, or volunteers in or adjacent to the proposed RPZ.

Grounds for reconsideration include the validity of any parking study or compliance with the community process to establish a zone.

The Director will designate a review officer who will review the reconsideration materials and other relevant information and make a recommendation to the Director on whether to continue with implementing the zone. The Director may pause implementation of the RPZ during the review process. The Director has 30 days to issue a decision. The Director's decision on reconsideration is final unless appealed to the Office of the Hearing Examiner.

An appeal of the Director's decision on reconsideration must be filed with the Office of the Hearing Examiner and must follow all Office of Hearing Examiner procedures. Their notice of appeal must be filed with the Hearing Examiner within 20 days following issuance of the Director's decision on reconsideration. The notice of appeal must contain a brief statement of the issues on appeal, the specific objections to the decision being appealed, along with supporting facts and documentation, and the relief sought. The notice of appeal must include the name of the appellant, address, phone number, and email address, if available.

After reviewing the notice of appeal and supporting documentation and conducting a hearing, the Examiner will issue a written decision within 30 days after the hearing's conclusion. The written decision will contain the reasons for the decision and the provisions for further appeal and will be mailed to the appellant. This decision is the final decision of the City.

## **12.8 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

If no request for reconsideration is filed within 15 days, implementation will proceed. If an appeal is filed, design and implementation will not proceed until all appeal timelines have been exhausted. After a final decision has been reached, SDOT will implement the RPZ within approximately six months. Implementation includes providing information about the permit application process to eligible residents, reviewing and issuing permits, and installing or removing parking signs as indicated by the final plan.

## 13 Permit Eligibility Within an RPZ

Residents who live on a blockface with RPZ signs are eligible to purchase permits for the zone indicated on the signs. The resident's property must either be physically adjacent or addressed to the street with RPZ signs on the adjacent blockface.

Some residents in an RPZ who do not live next to a blockface with RPZ signs may also be eligible:

- for non-arterial streets, if there is no parking on one side of the block, residents on that side of the block are eligible if there are RPZ signs on the opposite blockface; and
- residents in mixed-use or residential buildings may be eligible for RPZ permits if their address is surrounded, in front of the building and around the corners, by managed parking within an RPZ, even though RPZ signs are not on their blockface. Residents who have some amount of unrestricted parking on their street or on either of their side streets are not considered surrounded by managed parking and are not eligible for RPZ permits.

## 14 RPZ Modifications

Existing RPZs may be modified. Modifications include changes to the days or hours that the zone is in effect, changes to the time allowed for all vehicles to park without a permit, or adding or removing streets from a zone.

Like creating an RPZ, either residents or SDOT may initiate the process to modify an RPZ. SDOT staff may develop a proposal proactively with affected community stakeholders to modify an RPZ where conditions have changed or are expected to change.

SMC 11.16.317.E authorizes SDOT to modify an existing RPZ by two contiguous blocks or less through an administrative process described under “Small-Scale Modifications” below. Modifications to more than two contiguous blocks follow a similar process to creating a new zone and require a public hearing, described under “Large-Scale Modifications” below.

### 14.1 SMALL-SCALE MODIFICATIONS

Small-scale modifications include any changes to an RPZ on two contiguous blocks or less. Proposals to add or remove two or fewer contiguous blocks or to change the days or hours of the zone do not require a public hearing. These changes may be made by following an administrative process that identifies proposed changes to the RPZ and communicates these to affected community stakeholders. SDOT’s decision will be based on parking data, community input and how the public interest is best served.

The most common RPZ modification is a single-block expansion. A resident who lives on a block that is immediately adjacent to an existing RPZ may request that the zone be expanded to their block.

After receiving a request, SDOT staff will evaluate the proposed block to confirm that it qualifies for expansion. At a minimum, 75% of the available parking spaces on the block must be full, and 60% or more of the households on the proposed block must agree to join the RPZ. SDOT staff will also consider whether the observed occupancy relates to the parking demand generator for the zone, and the boundaries for the zone, as described in Section 12.5.

Requests to remove an existing block from an existing RPZ must be submitted from a resident on that block, and 60% or more of the households on the proposed block must agree to remove the block from the RPZ.

### 14.2 LARGE-SCALE MODIFICATIONS

If the proposed modification applies to more than two contiguous blocks, the modification follows a similar process to creating a new zone. Large-scale modifications require compliance with SMC 11.16.317.B.

When a request is made for a large-scale modification of a zone, SDOT will proceed in the same manner as if a request were made to create a new RPZ, as described in Section 12. Like other RPZ requests, SDOT staff will respond to requests for large-scale modifications in the order they are received. The timeframe for completing a parking study, community engagement efforts, and implementation may be dependent on staff resources, and staff may prioritize requests based on other City priorities.

For any large-scale modification, SDOT staff will lead a community engagement effort as described in Section 12.4 above. SDOT will also follow the same process required to create an RPZ that includes holding a public hearing and providing notice as required by the Seattle Municipal Code. A public hearing is not required for non-RPZ related changes to curbspace regulations that are made on existing RPZ blocks.

SDOT will determine whether to modify a zone based on parking data, community input and how the public interest is best served.

SDOT will announce its decision in a local newspaper and on the SDOT project website. SDOT will also notify all owners, commercial tenants, and residents of property within 300 feet of the RPZ, and all other interested parties contacted during the parking study and development of the RPZ.

Any decision to expand or reduce a zone by any number of blocks is subject to reconsideration, as for creating a new zone, and as described in Section 12.7. Any decision made after reconsideration may also be appealed to the Office of the Hearing Examiner as described in Section 12.7.

### **14.3 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

Large-scale modifications to existing RPZs are implemented and reviewed in the same manner as newly created RPZs, as described in Section 12.8. After a final decision has been made, SDOT will implement the changes to the RPZ within approximately six months. Implementation includes providing information about the permit application process to eligible residents, reviewing and issuing permits, and installing or removing parking signs as indicated by the final plan.

# 15 RPZ Removal

## 15.1 DATA-GATHERING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SMC 11.16.317.G authorizes SDOT to remove a zone if it best serves the public interest and meets at least one of the following criteria: low permit sales in a zone; a small number of blocks with RPZ signs (less than 10 contiguous blocks); the original parking demand generator no longer exists.

The process for removing an RPZ can be initiated by residents, community organizations, or SDOT.

If the community submits a request to remove a zone, SDOT will evaluate the request by first gathering data about parking conditions. At a minimum, this will include field verification of parking occupancy conditions on affected blocks and reports from SDOT staff and Seattle Police Department Parking Enforcement personnel familiar with the zone.

SDOT will also lead community engagement efforts to determine whether removing the RPZ is appropriate. Community engagement will include conducting surveys or sending mailings to affected community members and attending at least one area or community meeting or open house. Any parking condition data gathered will be shared with the community through various methods, including mailings, the SDOT website, and at a community meeting.

A public hearing with public notice is required before any final decision to remove a zone, as outlined in Section 12.4.

## 15.2 SDOT DECISION

SDOT will determine whether a zone should be removed using parking data and input from the community received through public outreach, surveys, information from the public hearing, and independent investigation. SDOT will notify the community and interested parties of the decision by mail, email, and the SDOT website.

Any decision to remove a zone is subject to reconsideration as outlined in Section 12.7. Any decision made after reconsideration may be appealed to the Office of the Hearing Examiner as also outlined in Section 12.7.

Whenever feasible, zones shall be removed at the beginning of a permit cycle, per SMC 11.16.317.G. Notice will be given to residents and signs will be removed.

Seattle Department of Transportation  
700 5th Ave, Suite 3800  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
(206) 684-ROAD (7623)  
[seattle.gov/transportation](http://seattle.gov/transportation)



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation

10.2025