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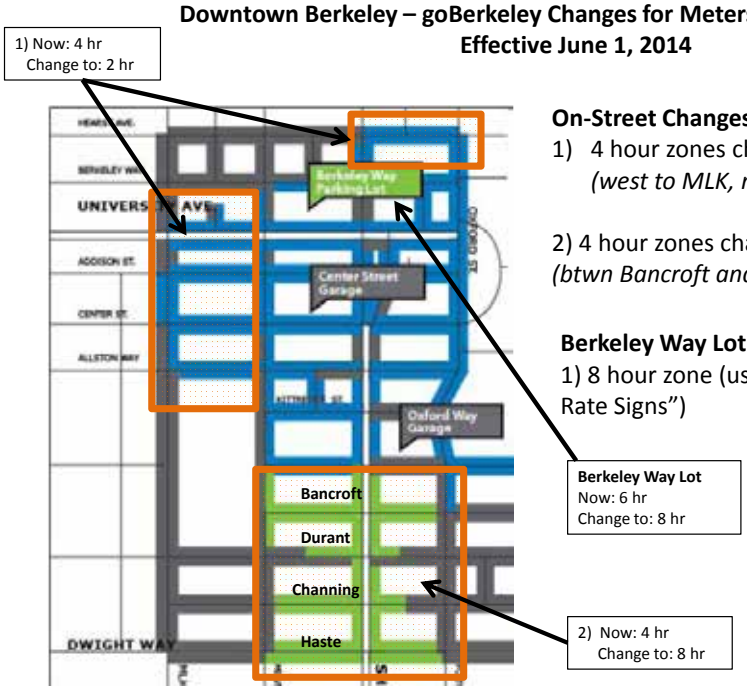
Carefully coded maps explained parking changes that resulted from the pilot program.

Downtown Berkeley – goBerkeley Changes for Meters & Signs
Effective June 1, 2014



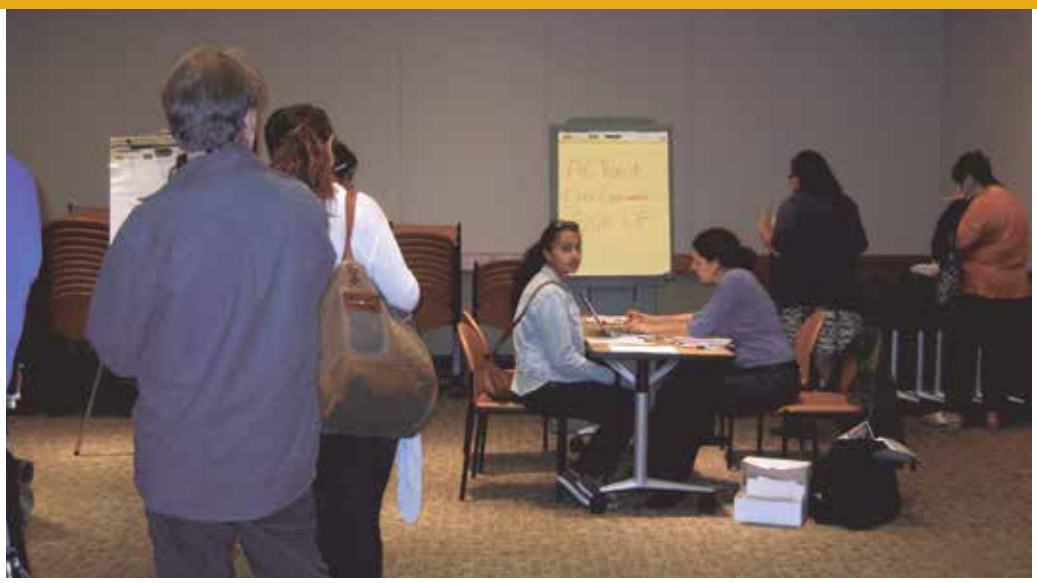
On-Street Changes

1) 4 hour zones change to 2 hour zones *(west to MLK, north to Hearst)*

2) 4 hour zones change to 8 hour zones *(btwn Bancroft and Dwight)*

Berkeley Way Lot Changes

1) 8 hour zone (use green "8 hr Value Rate Signs")



goBerkeley

For more information on goBerkeley, visit **goberkeley.info**.

Getting Started

The goBerkeley pilot is intended to improve ease of travel within three key areas of the city, explore and test methods to reduce local traffic congestion, improve parking options, and promote alternatives to driving one's own car in three of Berkeley's commercial areas. Our team worked closely with local businesses before goBerkeley started adjusting parking policies. We asked local employees and visitors what they needed and how we could help improve access to Berkeley's businesses. In other words, we started the process by communicating.

Incentives to Leave the Car Behind

The first step of the goBerkeley pilot was to encourage people to leave their cars at home. To start, Berkeley distributed 2,000 free transit passes to residents and employees. In addition, the city partnered with City CarShare to install six carshare vehicles and provided subsidies for businesses that wished to sign up. The goal was to keep people coming downtown without their vehicles, leaving precious parking spaces available for those who absolutely needed to drive.

Keep It Simple

The next step was to design a program that would be effective in shifting parkers from congested parts of town to low-use areas. To do that, we had to keep our message as simple as possible. We quickly discarded more sophisticated parking schemes, including rates that varied block by block or by time of day, because the public told us those policies were too complicated. Instead, we created standard zones that we marked with new, color-coded static parking signs.

Congested areas were marked with blue signs that offered premium rates for two-hour maximum stays, and low-use areas were marked with green signs offering value rates for up to eight hours. In customer satisfaction surveys, Berkeley parkers reported that their favorite parts of the pilot were the new signs and standard time limits; there was no confusion about where they could park or for how long.

Providing Choices, Not Disincentives

The goBerkeley pilot program was designed to provide choices. Yes, parking meters in congested areas now charged a higher rate, but metered spaces just a few blocks away offered lower rates than before and with higher time limits. The parking scheme was promoted as offering choices to the parker: find a parking space without circling and pay a higher rate or drive a few blocks away to park for cheaper and longer. Along with the visual cues from the parking signs, this concept caught hold and improved parking conditions—the number of blocks in downtown that were too full dropped from 37 percent to 25 percent.

Longer Time Limits Don't Really Hurt

Before the pilot started, time limits at metered parking spaces ranged from 30 minutes to two hours. The public reported that this confused them and didn't give them enough time to complete their errands, dining, or shopping. An eight-hour time limit was introduced in areas with very low parking occupancy to provide an incentive for parkers. A few days after the change, these low-use areas became very popular! However, our data showed

goBerkeley involved lots of communication with community members, both in writing and in person, along with gathering people together to collect data and share information from the project.

that people were not parking for eight hours; rather, they averaged three to four hours of parking, but drivers reported liking the flexibility of being able to park for longer if they felt like it.

As part of the pilot program, we also tracked the conditions in neighborhood streets around the commercial areas to determine whether spillover, or drivers avoiding meters by parking on residential streets, was occurring. Had we detected spillover the police department could have increased traditional enforcement and/or deployed more efficient enforcement technology. However, this action was not required.

Overall, longer time limits may have been one of the key factors to spreading demand from the congested areas to low-use areas and making the best use of all Berkeley's parking spaces.

Collect Data, Cheaply if Possible

The goBerkeley pilot relied on tried-and-true methods of data collection, manually counting the number of parked cars and performing questionnaires of businesses, employees, visitors, and drivers. These methods are simple to replicate and, most importantly, dependable. Berkeley did not have the resources to install and manage advanced technology, such as in-ground parking sensors, but we made use of the technology available to us.

The pilot is currently leveraging two existing pieces of equipment: credit card-enabled smart meters and automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) systems to estimate parking occupancy. These two technologies are cost-effective, provide more frequent data points, and can serve other departments when not collecting parking occupancy data.

Berkeley recently ran a demonstration that showed that the two technologies together provide the data that we need to adjust rates at relatively low cost.

Data-Driven Decisions, Not Revenue

The goBerkeley pilot's goals were to improve parking conditions in a way that reduced congestion from parking search traffic and supported the business community. The tools happened to include adjusting rates up or down. Adjustments will occur based on data and only to reach the stated targets of one to two parking spaces per block. The goal is not, has never been, and will never be to raise revenue for the city. This paradigm has been critical to the success of the goBerkeley pilot and was the biggest change in the way that citizens viewed the city's management of parking.

Trust Your Operation Departments

Last, but not least, the biggest lesson learned from the goBerkeley pilot is the importance of the city staff that run the parking system. The city's meter maintenance division, streets division, and parking enforcement professionals were key in translating academic theories into real-world success. Their feedback to parking planners about what the driving public would accept and understand was critical to the design of the ultimately simple parking scheme.

These field operations departments can also tell you what the signs and meters can do, what can be maintained into the future, and when you're off track—they care deeply about their jobs and their city and will do the job right. Berkeley's decision to work with existing staff, departments, and resources instead of depending on contractors or temporary help was a big one.

We will evaluate the effect of the goBerkeley pilot program and make recommendations about each aspect of the program to the Berkeley City Council this spring for a decision on whether to continue in the future. Based on the data and feedback, the pilot has been effective and popular, but the lessons learned will be useful to Berkeley and other cities, regardless of the outcome.

DANETTE PERRY, CAPP, is parking services manager with the Public Works/Transportation Division of the City of Berkeley. She can be reached at dperry@ci.berkeley.ca.us or 510.981.7057.

WILLA NG, PE, is a principal planner with the City of Berkeley. She can be reached at wng@cityofberkeley.info or 510.981.7064.