



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Department of Public Works**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Kathy Robertson, Neighborhood Traffic Control Coordinator  
Stephen Padua, AICP, Transportation Planner  
David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager  
Kathy Brown, Public Works Director

**Date:** February 4, 2016

**Subject:** DOWNTOWN PARKING UPDATE

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that City Council receive an update on strategies that have been implemented to improve downtown parking. It is also recommended that the City Council give direction to staff on time-restricted parking on Market Street.

**BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

This memo includes a summary update of all strategies, with particular emphasis on four areas: employee permit parking on Lake Avenue West, the employee parking permit program, Market Street time restrictions, and the planned new parking lot south of City Hall.

During the first half of 2015, Council actively investigated and recommended a package of changes to downtown parking as described in Table 1:

Table 1 City Council Actions to Improve Parking

<b>Council Meeting Date (2015)</b>	<b>Council Action</b>
January 6	Received briefing on draft parking report, directed staff to move forward with public outreach around a full range of options.
April 7	Received briefing on results of extensive public outreach; staff presented possible actions for 2015 and 2016. Directed staff to take a more aggressive approach to implementation by including more elements in the 2015 actions. Directed the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee reviewed various options, and suggested additional near-term actions.
May 5	Staff recommended a number of options for improving parking and submitted a request for funding, which City Council approved.
June 16	Council directed that <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sunday enforcement would not be considered at this time.</li><li>• Evaluation of the lot south of City Hall should continue.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of concepts for additional parking at the Lake &amp; Central lot should begin.</li> </ul>
July 7th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopted a resolution updating Parking Guidelines for Downtown Parking G-11 to allow employee permit parking on Lake Avenue West.</li> <li>• Approved the staff recommendation to not exempt homeowners on Market Street from the time restrictions.</li> <li>• Directed staff to collect data about parking usage on Lake Avenue West and Market Street, and report back to Council in approximately 6 months.</li> </ul>

Table 2 lists the near-term parking actions that were approved by Council since April 2015 and the current status of those actions. The following four actions are discussed in further detail following Table 2:

- Lake Avenue West Employee Permit Parking,
- Market Street Time Restrictions
- Parking lot South of City Hall
- Employee Parking Permit Program

Table 2 Status of Downtown Parking Actions

Recommended Action	Status
Lake Ave West Employee Permit Parking	Implemented; see below for more discussion.
Market Street Time Restrictions	Implemented; see below for more discussion.
Employee Parking Permit Program	Implemented; see below for more discussion.
New signage at City Hall parking entrances	Implemented.
Improve wayfinding signage	Implemented.
Update & distribute parking maps	Implemented.
Steer people to parking website	Implemented.
Additional Parking Enforcement Vehicle Cameras	Completed & operational.
Pay Parking Lake & Central lot (9:00 AM to 9:00 PM)	Implemented.
Interim Parking Lot South of City Hall: 4 hour time limit for public/all day for employee permits.	Design and permitting underway; see below for more discussion
Additional Sites	Implement some low cost changes in 2016 Striping Program.
Explore Options for Shared Parking Agreements	Completed, results of potential private parking locations given to Kirkland Chamber of Commerce for sharing with employers.

Library Garage Improvements (power washing, striping, painting, LED lights.)	Completed.
Validation	Working on Pay-by-Phone integration options with paid parking and Police systems.

*Employee Parking on Lake Avenue West*

**Background:** As described in Table 1, at its July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, City Council approved allowing downtown employees with permits to park on Lake Avenue West in existing parking areas on the northeast side of the street opposite the residences. Residents and their guests with permits can continue to park in the permit-only areas on both sides of the street. This arrangement is in effect 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Employee permits that are valid in the permit areas of the library garage are also valid for parking on Lake Avenue West, although an employee permit does not guarantee an employee a parking space. The permits are available at no cost to downtown employees and are distributed at the Public Works counter at City Hall. The employee parking permits are numbered and associated with an employee, a specific car and a downtown business for tracking purposes.



**Figure 1** Lake Avenue W. Employee parking is allowed in the green areas and prohibited in the red areas. The black area is time limited.

The City’s Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) use electronic License Plate Readers to check compliance and monitor this street 3 to 5 times per day. Residents can report concerns to a contact at Public Works during working hours and to the NORCOM police dispatch center phone number after hours. Public Works staff have been checking parking usage along Lake Avenue West on an average of twice weekly.

**Usage:** Typically, up to 9 cars (of approximately 55 available stalls) have been observed parking on the eastern portion of Lake Avenue West, west of the time-restricted public parking zone. Most of these cars have employee permits and are repeat parkers. Occasionally, a car with a resident or guest permit or contractors or vendors, who may not have a permit, park in this zone. Between December 26<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>, and on a few other occasions, staff

observed 1 to 4 additional employee-permit cars parked in the next zone to the northeast. Cars with employee permits were not observed beyond these first two zones. Parking remains available to residents, their guests, and contractors on the southwest side of the street and most of the northeast side.

**Concerns/Requests:** Public Works and Kirkland Police received 6 questions or concerns from residents and one company in the past 6 months (see Table 3). Kirkland Police received 8 parking complaints of which 3 resulted in citations and the remaining 5 were either warnings or involved educating the resident about where to look for employee permits.

Table 3. Questions and concerns about Lake Avenue W.

From	Date	Question or Concern	Response
Resident	7/10/2015	Did the City notify employee permit holders when they notified the residents?	No, residents were informed in July, formal outreach to employers was conducted in the fall.
Resident	7/24/2015	Car parked for a week	Referred to KPD
Resident	1/18/2016	Cars parked with no permits	Referred to KPD
Resident	1/10/2016	Cars Parked late at night	Referred to KPD
Resident	1/8/2016	Company-branded cars parked; one for more than 24 hours	PW discussed with company
Employee	1/20/2016	Company cars used for commuting should be eligible for permits	PW Working on policy to allow this.

Two Lake Avenue West residents were recently contacted to find out their observations on employee parking over the past six months. One resident compiled her comments and those from neighbors, and emailed them to staff from the Public Works Department. They are included in Attachment A. A summary was included in the comments:

*Most residents have indicated that the employee permit parking has not been an issue to date. But we realize that the busy summer season has not yet begun, and hope that there will continue to be regular reviews scheduled to monitor the parking situation.*

**Findings:** Employees with parking permits are using the Lake Avenue West parking. Residents have not sent in complaints about a lack of parking because employees are now parking on Lake Avenue West. Enforcement has been effectively managing potential parking violations.

The PEOs will continue to monitor Lake Avenue West for parking violations. KPD will continue to respond when complaints are received.

*Employee Parking Permit Program*

The City has completed outreach to Downtown Kirkland businesses that are authorized to use the Employee parking program. A letter was sent out to all downtown businesses (October 2015), an email was distributed through the Chamber of Commerce (November 2015) and brochure was distributed door-to-door (December 2015 and January 2016). The majority of new permits have been issued at City Hall, but on three occasions (November 9th, December 1st, & December 3rd), a table was setup at the Library Garage to receive the new registrations and distribute new permits. Enforcement of the new permits is planned to commence in mid-February.

*Parking lot South of City Hall*

Public Works is currently working on the design of an 84-stall, pervious pavement surface, parking lot. The parking lot will be signed as permit parking for downtown employees. Further geotechnical investigation and soil analysis is required to accommodate the surface water drainage for the pervious pavement surface. The project also includes a survey and impervious surface calculation for all five parcels in the City Hall campus (Attachment B). To facilitate project implementation, Public Works staff is currently working with Planning staff to find efficiencies in the permitting process. Staff has also set up an advisory group with internal and external stakeholders to share information, as well as to guide the project. Based on the planned timeline, construction for the project is anticipated to begin in late spring 2016. The project has a budget of \$820,000. The construction market continues to be strong and 2016 construction cost indicators continue to rise. Staff will closely monitor construction costs and provide updates as necessary.

*Time Restrictions on Market Street Parking*

Based on Council adoption of staff recommendations, Market Street has 2-hour time limits between Central and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4-hour time restrictions between 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The time restrictions are in effect from 9 AM to 7:30 PM, apply to both sides of the street and do not apply to boat trailers.

During the time Council was deliberating about this change, public comments were received indicating that 2 hours was not a long enough period for shoppers to complete their errands and that, by placing any restriction, important employee parking was being eliminated. Establishing 2 hour parking as a way of improving turnover and providing customer parking met Council's the overarching goals so the decision was made to move forward with 2 hour parking. Post implementation, questions about utilization were again raised by the public.



Parking Enforcement Officers check this stretch of Market Street 2 to 4 times per day, typically between 9 AM and 4 PM, Monday through Saturday. There are approximately 14 parking stalls on the east side and approximately 15 on the west side of Market Street. License Plate Reader data from October 27, through December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 was analyzed to understand usage of the time limited parking.

During this data collection period, the reader picked up a total of 638 license plates with 50% or more of the vehicles parked on the west side versus the east side of Market. On average, 7 cars are parked on the east side and 9 cars parked on the west side. This results in an estimated occupancy of 50% on the east side and 53% on the west side (See Table 4). Given an optimum occupancy of 85%, staff recommends changing the 2-hour zone to a 4-hour time limit as a way to increase utilization under the theory that the stalls will be more desirable if they have a longer time limit. In fact, the reason for limiting the length of stay was that the stalls were over utilized. Staff will continue to use license plate reader data to evaluate the occupancy.

Table 4. Market Street Parking Occupancy

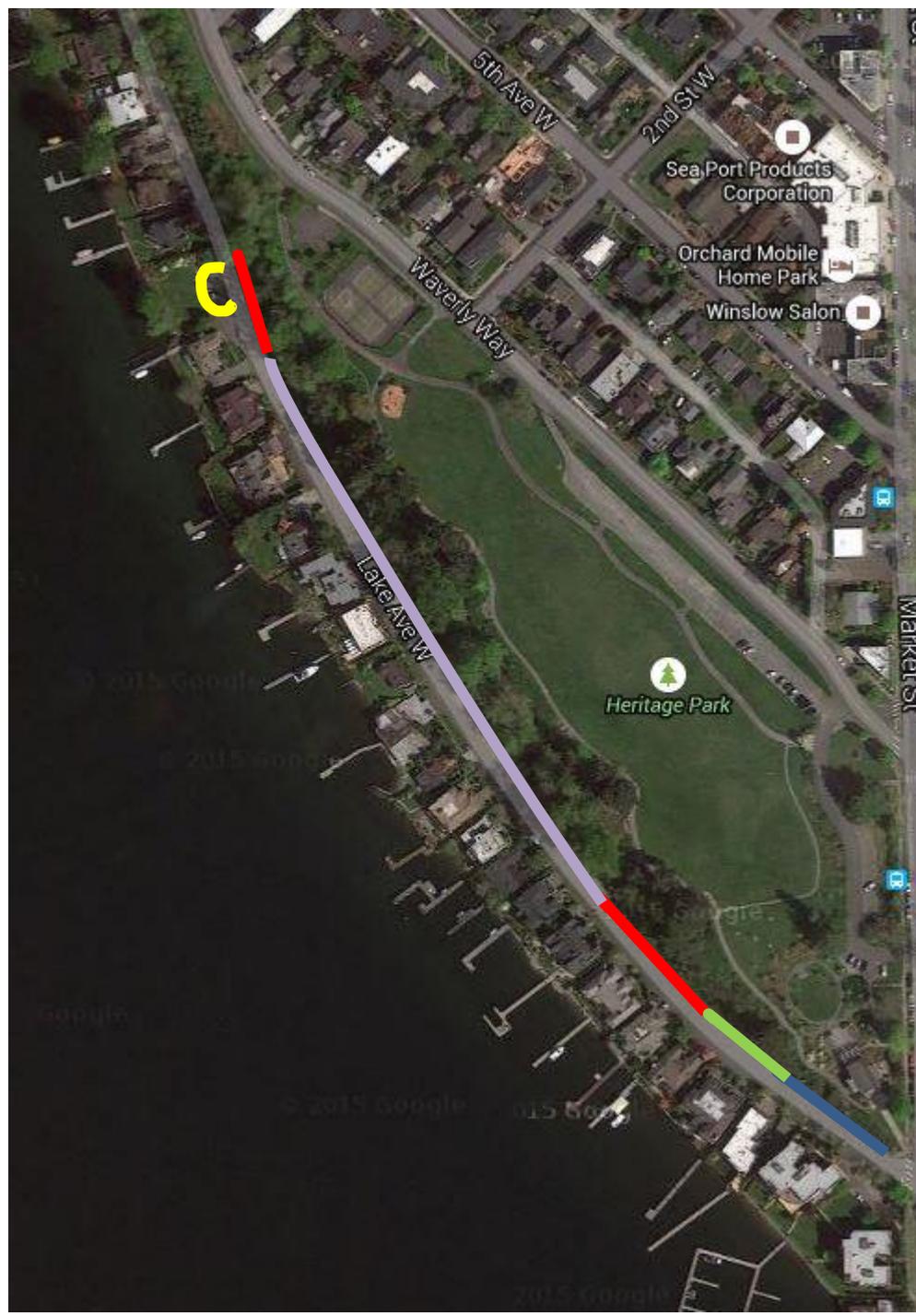
Side of Street	Number of stalls	Average number of parked cars	Estimated occupancy
East	14	7	50%
West	15	9	60%

*KAN Survey*

Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods (KAN) has conducted a survey of neighborhood parking concerns. A report on this survey was given under the Items from the Audience section of the January 19 Council meeting. KAN is preparing a follow up survey to examine possible solutions to the concerns.

**SUMMARY**

Council approved a wide ranging list of near-term actions to improve downtown parking and those actions have now been implemented. Nearly all of these actions appear to be working well, with no major concerns from businesses or residents. The exception is the 2-hour time limit on Market Street, which appears to have changed the over-utilization problem to an under-utilization problem at this location. Staff is therefore seeking Council approval to change the current 2-hour time restricted zone on Market Street to 4 hour in order to improve utilization.

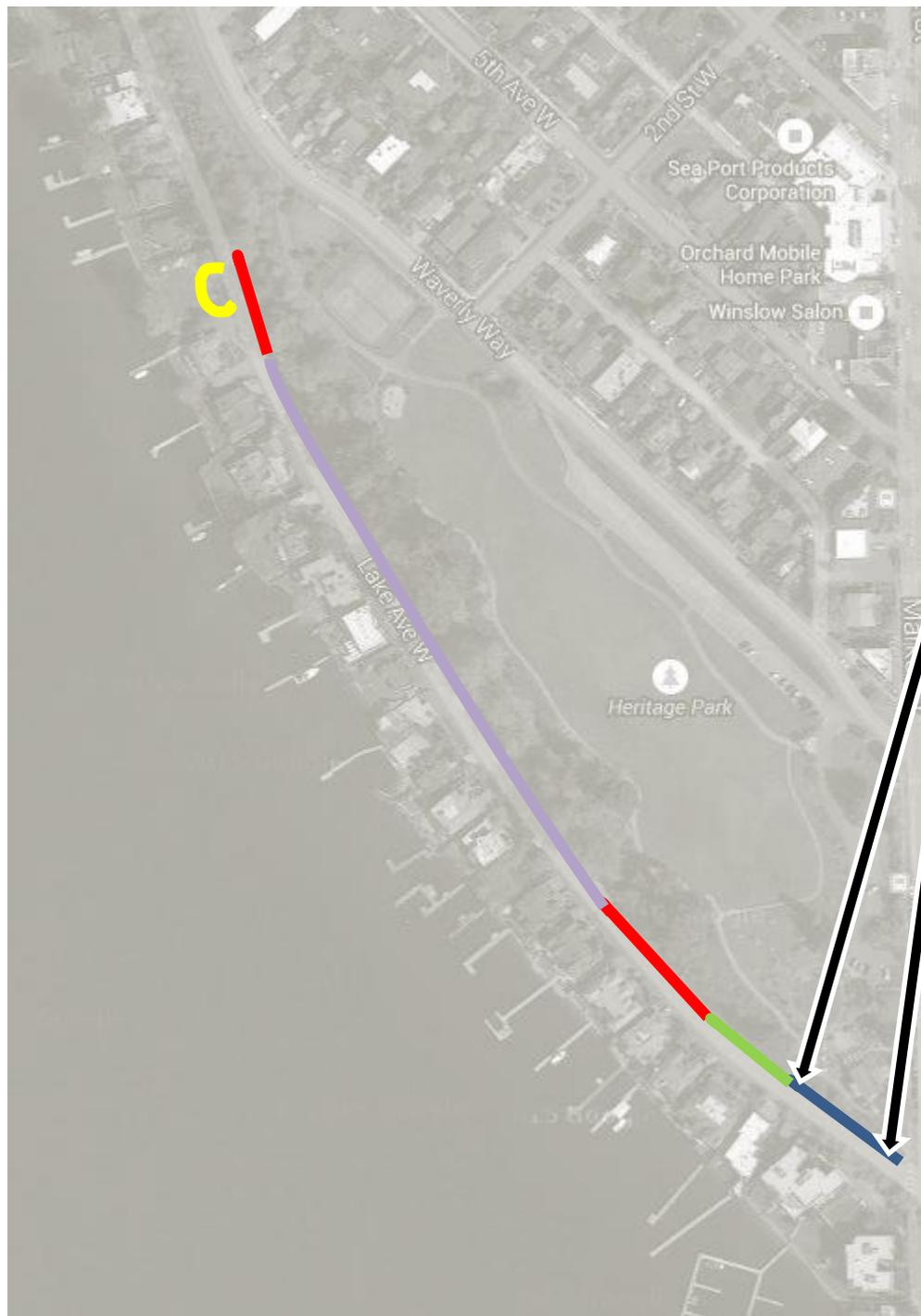


## Lake Ave W

### Parking Update

since employee permitted parking started in July 2015

*The street is seeing an increasing number of employee vehicles parking along the east side of the street, but most residents seem to think the situation is working so far.*



## Section 1: Entrance to street

Length: 140 feet

Parking: 7 spaces  
2-hour parking 9am-7pm

Homes: 1 condominium building

Prior use: Full with commuter parking

Current Use: 0-2 cars during day, 4-5 cars on weekend evenings

*If the purpose of this area is customer parking, it would appear there is very little demand as spaces are rarely used.*

*There is a single spot on the west side that does not require a permit – there is a commuter car parked there nearly every day all day long.*

## Section 2

Length: ~180 feet

Parking: 9 spaces, employee or resident permit

Homes: 3 single family residences

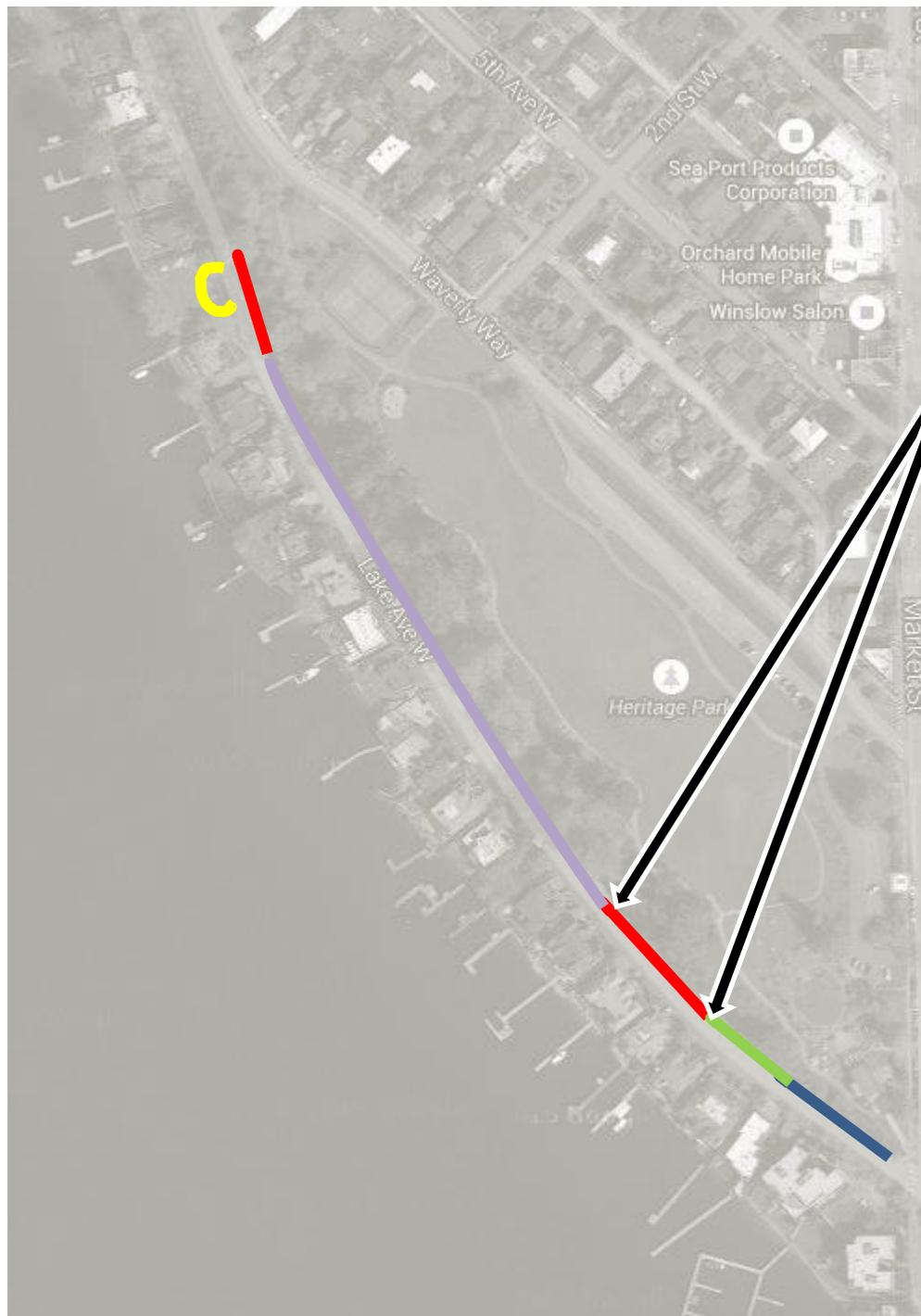
Prior use: Resident/guest parking

Current Use: all 9 spaces full weekdays, 8am to 6pm.  
Vehicles usually park off pavement, leaving right-of-way available.

Nearly all spaces used by employees with permits daily. Occasional overnight use.

*On most days, guests/residents of the 3 homes at the street cannot use the parking across the street, or within 4 other houses.*

*Some increase in litter along roadside has been observed. Steady degradation of parking surface (dirt), with muddy ruts, compaction of soil.*



### Section 3

Length: ~180 feet

Parking: no parking zone (open ditch)

Homes: 3 single family residences

Prior use: occasional car parked in street

Current Use: usually no cars

*Guests/residents of these homes cannot park across the street*

**Section 4**

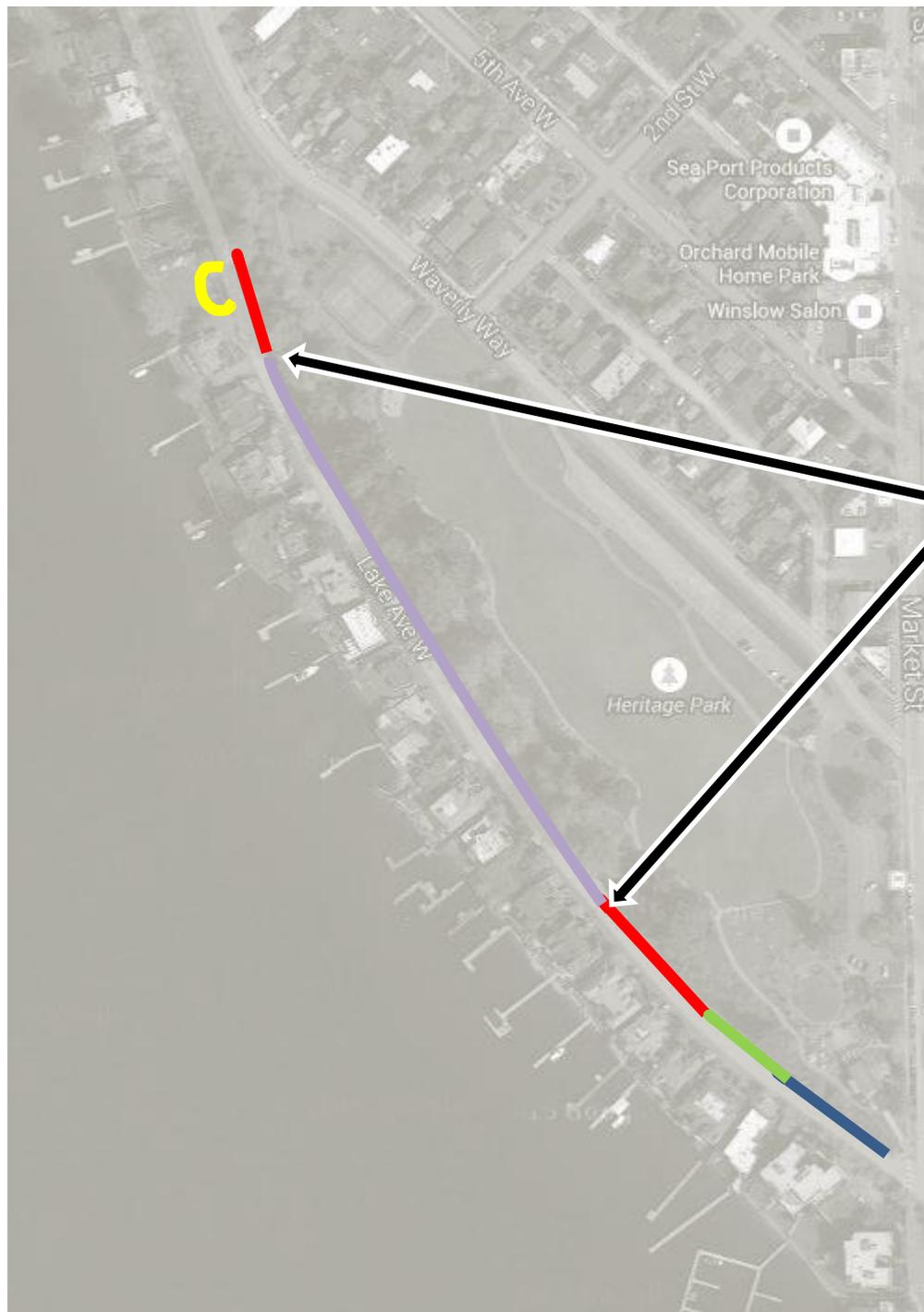
Length: ~900 feet

Parking: 45 spaces, employee or resident permit

Homes: 12 single family residences

Prior use: Resident/guest parking

Current Use: First section seeing increasing use by employees, especially since January 1 (now regularly 4+ vehicles). Remaining section sees occasional use by residents, guests, visitors.



## Section 5

Length: ~160 feet

Parking: no parking along street. Three marked stalls for the park

Homes: 1 single family residence, next to mini-park

Prior use: occasional use of 3 marked stalls and parking on east side of street (signed “no parking” but frequently saw park-overflow vehicles. New “no parking” signs installed.)

Current Use: parking for park. Frequent night use even when park is closed. Parks department has painted “no parking” outside of marked stalls to discourage improper use.



*With current time-limited and employee permit parking, this area is generally unavailable for resident and guest parking from approximately 8:30am to 6:30pm Monday through Saturday. The guests/residents of the first homes at the street may have to park up to 7 homes away.*

# Other comments/observations

- Same employee cars parked each day. Vehicles stay all day. This is beneficial in minimizing increased traffic, but means that guests to residences have no place nearby to park all day long.
- The number of employee vehicles is steadily increasing over time (1-4 employee cars in the first few months, 12-14+ cars now)
- Low Sunday use by employees.
- The 2-hour parking area (7 spaces available) has changed from being 100% full of commuters to having only 1-2 cars during the day, and 2-5 cars in evenings (when 2-hour parking no long applies)
- Most, but not all, vehicles in permit area have employee permits. Tickets rarely seem to be issued to non-permitted vehicles. There seems to be confusion over the ?new? employee permits.
- The conditions of the parking area degrading, especially in wet winter weather. Not only are there deep ruts, but that dirt is tracked into the street when the cars turn around in the middle of the street.
- Cars turn around regularly in home driveways.
- Amount of garbage along street has increased somewhat.
- On at least one occasion, Fire cars were responding to an incident on the street and, with employee cars parked along the street, there was no room for vehicles to pass.

***Most residents have indicated that the employee permit parking has not been an issue to date. But we realize that the busy summer season has not yet begun, and hope that there will continue to be regular reviews scheduled to monitor the parking situation.***

